



E 13126





THE RUSSIAN JOURNALS  
OF  
MARTHA AND CATHERINE WILMOT



MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED  
LONDON • BOMBAY • CALCUTTA • MADRAS  
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY  
NEW YORK • BOSTON • CHICAGO  
DALLAS • ATLANTA • SAN FRANCISCO

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY  
OF CANADA, LIMITED  
TORONTO





MARTHA WILMOT

*From a portrait painted by an unknown artist in Russia, now in the possession of Mrs. Evelyn Marindin, M.B.E.*

# The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot

*Being an Account by two Irish Ladies of their Adventures in  
Russia as Guests of the celebrated Princess Daschkaw,  
containing vivid Descriptions of contemporary Court  
Life and Society, and lively Anecdotes of many  
interesting historical Characters*

1803-1808

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, BY  
THE MARCHIONESS OF LONDONDERRY  
AUTHOR OF 'HENRY CHAPLIN: A MEMOIR,' 'THE MAGIC INKPOT'

AND

H. M. HYDE  
SOMETIME EXHIBITIONER OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD, BARRISTER-AT-LAW  
OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, FELLOW OF THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
AUTHOR OF 'THE RISE OF CASTLEREAGH'

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED  
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1935

**COPYRIGHT**

**First edition 1934  
Reprinted 1935**

**PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN**

## CONTENTS

PREFACE	- - - - -	PAGE ix
INTRODUCTION	- - - - -	xiii

### *PART I*

#### MARTHA WILMOT

JOURNAL AND LETTERS FROM RUSSIA 1803-1805	- -	I
---	-----	---

### *PART II*

#### CATHERINE WILMOT

LETTERS FROM RUSSIA 1805-1807	- - - -	161
TWO LETTERS FROM ELEANOR CAVANAGH	- - -	179

### *PART III*

#### MARTHA WILMOT

JOURNAL AND LETTERS FROM RUSSIA 1806-1808	- -	261
INDEX	- - - - -	417





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MARTHA WILMOT	- - - - -	- <i>Frontispiece</i>
<i>From a portrait painted by an unknown artist in Russia, now in the possession of Mrs. Evelyn Marindin, M.B.E.</i>		
		FACING PAGE
COUNT SIMON WORONZOW	- - - - -	10
● <i>From the portrait by George Romney in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad.</i>		
COUNTESS CATHERINE WORONZOW	- - - - -	14
<i>From the portrait by Sir Henry Raeburn formerly in the Woronzow Palace in Odessa.</i>		
ST. PETERSBURG : THE NEVA	- - - - -	22
<i>From a print of the drawing by Mornay in the British Museum.</i>		
THE STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT BY FALCONET IN ST. PETERSBURG	- - - - -	30
<i>From a print of the drawing by Mornay in the British Museum.</i>		
PRINCESS DASCHKAW	- - - - -	46
<i>From the portrait by D. Levitsky in the possession of the Reverend E. M. Walker.</i>		
COUNT ALEXIS ORLOFF	- - - - -	70
<i>From a miniature formerly in the possession of the Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich.</i>		
COUNTESS ANNE ORLOFF	- - - - -	70
<i>From a portrait formerly in the Imperial Foreign Office in Moscow.</i>		
COUNT THEODOR ROSTOPTCHIN	- - - - -	106
<i>From the portrait by Salvator Tonci formerly in the Imperial Foreign Office in Moscow.</i>		
PRINCESS DASCHKAW IN EXILE	- - - - -	154
<i>From a print of the painting given by Princess Daschkaw to Martha Wilmot.</i>		
CATHERINE WILMOT	- - - - -	163
<i>From a portrait painted by an unknown artist in Russia, now in the possession of Mrs. Evelyn Marindin, M.B.E.</i>		

	FACING PAGE
THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH        -        -        -        -        -        -	172
<i>From the portrait by G. Monnier formerly in the Stroganoff Collection in St. Petersburg.</i>	
PRINCESS EUDOXIE GALITZIN        -        -        -        -        -        -	174
<i>From the portrait by Alexis Egoroff in the Tretiakoff Gallery in Moscow.</i>	
THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER I        -        -        -        -        -        -	214
<i>From the portrait by G. Monnier formerly in the Stroganoff Collection in St. Petersburg.</i>	
MOSCOW : A VIEW FROM THE KREMLIN        -        -        -	222
<i>From a print in the British Museum.</i>	
COUNTESS IRENE WORONZOW        -        -        -        -        -        -	304
<i>From the portrait by Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun formerly in the possession of Count I. Woronzow-Daschkaw.</i>	
PRINCE MICHAEL WORONZOW        -        -        -        -        -        -	392
<i>From the portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad.</i>	

## PREFACE

THE originals of the following letters and diaries are preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin and the Council of the Academy has kindly granted permission for them to be published. They were previously in the possession of the historian W. E. H. Lecky, whose father had been connected by marriage with the Wilmots ; and after his death in 1903 they were deposited by his widow in the Academy (apparently on his instructions), where they remained practically unnoticed for thirty years. A small portion of the journals which it has been necessary to insert in order to maintain the continuity of the narrative, namely the account of Martha Wilmot's homeward voyage from Russia in 1808 (pages 395 to 415), has already appeared in the Appendix to *The Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw* (London, 1840) while a garbled version of some of Catherine Wilmot's letters has been included in the same work. Otherwise none of the mss has been previously published.

If the journals were made available for publication by virtue of Lecky's posthumous generosity, they owe their appearance in their present form largely to the enterprise of the Marchioness of Londonderry. I was made aware of their existence about a year ago when assisting Lady Londonderry to find material for a projected biography of Frances Anne, Lady Londonderry, whose husband, Lord Stewart, was British Ambassador to Austria at the time of their marriage in 1819 and later became third Marquess of Londonderry. The late Countess of Mansfield had previously told Lady Londonderry that she had seen a number of very interesting letters which concerned Frances Anne at this period, and that they had been shown to her by Mrs. Evelyn Marindin, M.B.E., of Fordel, Glenfarg, Perthshire, in whose possession they were. These letters were written by Mrs. Martha Bradford, wife of the Rev. William Bradford, who was Chaplain to

the British Embassy in Vienna. Before her marriage Mrs. Bradford was Martha Wilmot. Mrs. Marindin is her great-grandniece.

These and other letters of Mrs. Bradford in Mrs. Marindin's possession were found to contain the most vivid and delightful descriptions of the times immediately following the Congress of Vienna, when Austria was the centre of the political and social life of Europe. Lady Londonderry was so struck by the quality of their style and contents that she asked Mrs. Marindin to be allowed to edit them for publication, and permission was kindly given. At this stage I was fortunate enough to be consulted, and I have enjoyed the privilege of helping to prepare the letters for the press. On examination considerable gaps were discovered in the correspondence for the years 1821 and 1822, when the Bradfords went on a tour through Italy and the Tyrol. Different circumstances led me to suppose that I might possibly find some other material which could be used to fill the gaps. In particular my friend Mr. Thomas Sadleir informed me that he had seen in the library of the Royal Irish Academy a ms. copy of a diary written by Martha Wilmot's sister Catherine, and describing a Continental tour which she had made with several members of the Mount Cashell family after the Peace of Amiens in 1801. (The original of this diary is in the possession of Major H. F. Chetwood-Aiken at Woodbrook, Queen's County, and it was published by Mr. Sadleir in 1920 under the title of *An Irish Peer on the Continent*.) A search of the Academy archives accordingly revealed not only a diary of the Italian tour kept by Mrs. Bradford in 1821-22, but also numerous fresh letters and a mass of papers relating to the journey which she had made to Russia with her sister Catherine twenty years before as the guest of Princess Daschkaw. I forthwith proceeded to select portions of the new material for publication.

Rather more than half of the Russian letters and diaries of Martha and Catherine Wilmot now appears in print. It was decided, after some consideration, to publish these first, principally for chronological reasons, leaving the Austrian letters and remaining material to form another volume, which, it is hoped, will follow the present work shortly. In the present work Lady Londonderry has written the Introduction and I am responsible for the notes, while the text has been edited by us together.

The assistance which we have received from various quarters in the preparation of this book I am glad to acknowledge.

To the Royal Irish Academy we are indebted not only for permission to publish the bulk of the material reproduced here, but also for the many kindnesses shown to me by the officials in the course of my researches on its premises. To Mrs. Evelyn Marindin we owe our sincerest thanks for much information relating to the history of the Wilmots and throwing open to us the family papers in her possession. Without her friendly interest and co-operation the production of this book would have been impossible. To the Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics we are obliged for information and facilities extended to me on the occasion of my visit last year to the Palace of Alupka, formerly the residence of Count I. Woronzow-Daschkaw in the Crimea and now a State museum. For further advice and help our thanks are due to Sir Nevile Wilkinson, Ulster-King-of-Arms ; to Mr. T. U. Sadleir, Deputy Ulster-King-of-Arms ; to the Rev. E. M. Walker, Fellow and late Provost of Queen's College, Oxford ; to Major and Mrs. H. F. Chetwood-Aiken ; and to a Russian friend, Miss Hélène Heroys. We must finally express our warmest gratitude to Count and Countess G. Bennigsen for reading this book in proof and for giving us the benefit of their extensive knowledge of the period. Their suggestions and criticisms have been of the greatest value.

Numerous authorities have been utilised in writing the notes, but I have found the following works of especial assistance : *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Polovtsov's *Russky Biografichesky Slovar*, the Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich's *Russky Portrety*, and the collections of *Russky Archiv* and *Archiv Vorontsov* edited by Bartenev. *The Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw* edited by Mrs. Bradford have been indispensable, and I have derived considerable help from the German edition of this work, which contains a useful Introduction by Alexander Herzen.

For permission to reproduce illustrations we desire to thank Mrs. Marindin, the Rev. E. M. Walker, and the Trustees of the British Museum.

The original spelling has been retained throughout the text of the letters and diaries apart from a few instances where slight

alterations have been made in the interests of clarity. But modern forms have been followed in the transliteration of Russian names in the notes, except in one or two obvious cases where it has been thought better to preserve the forms sanctioned by contemporary usage.

H. MONTGOMERY HYDE.

LONDON, *April*, 1934.

## INTRODUCTION

IN any age or country it will always be of the greatest interest to many to know how people lived, where they went, what they wore and how they looked ; what they saw and said ; and also, in a lesser degree, with what problems they were beset. This is the reason that has prompted us to publish the letters of Catherine and Martha Wilmot.

For information on these subjects, posterity is principally indebted to the diarist and letter-writer, who have committed their thoughts and impressions to paper, as they have occurred.

To us, who live in the early days of the twentieth century, this practice is a lost art. We hardly write at all—instead we telephone. Diplomats and important personages fly across Europe in swift aeroplanes for personal interviews, and return as swiftly to report to their respective heads of departments—leaving nothing or little written for posterity to read.

Subsequent developments may alter conclusions, but first-hand impressions remain unimpaired and of great value, and a record of them from competent eye-witnesses must always remain of permanent value.

The diaries and letters with which we are immediately concerned provide such a record. Both Catherine and Martha Wilmot were intelligent and well educated, with a graphic power of description. They successfully undertook a journey from Ireland to Russia during the Napoleonic Wars and spent several years there as guests of Princess Daschkaw, one of the most remarkable women in history. Through her influence and companionship they met everyone of note in the empire, and were brought into close contact with most of the Court entourage and political celebrities of the day.

Owing to the fact that Ireland has never been a rich country, younger sons of Irish families, like the Scots, have from time



immemorial sought work and adventure abroad : yet Russia, from its inaccessibility and difference of climate, has attracted few of them to her shores. Strange though it may appear at first sight, the native Irish and the Russians, although outwardly very different, yet have a mutual resemblance, both in temperament and character. (It is perhaps largely superficial, but it exists none the less.)

Although the Wilmots cannot by any stretch of the imagination be identified with the native Irish—their blood and social position, let alone religion, keeping them apart—none the less through length of time these Anglo-Irish families developed an understanding and sympathy with the Irish temperament which enabled the two sisters to understand much in Russia, which to an ordinary Englishman would have been a sealed book.

Both Russians and Irish have a vein of melancholy running through them. Both have the naïve simplicity of children, blended with a certain cunning in their character. Both are prone to superstition. They are still, as peasantry, very ignorant, almost insanely passionate in their devotion to a tradition or a cause, quite regardless whether the tradition is founded on fact or the grievance which supported the cause has long been removed. Political misgovernment and repression through lack of understanding has been the lot of the majority in each country.

Catherine and Martha found many familiar traits of character in the Russia of their day, and their letters are therefore all the more interesting, as they penetrated, swiftly and surely, although perhaps not always consciously, into the essentials of Russian national life. Their delightfully witty and graphic style adds charm and force to the narrative of their adventures and impressions, as they write in that light and easy vein in which the cultured Irish society of their day excelled.

They were received at the Court of the Emperor and Empress, and were not only the guests of the great personages of the Court, but went out also in the society of the rich merchant classes, which gave them further insight into the Russian life of the day ; and with the Princess they often visited the peasants in their homes on her estate.

In spite of the exemplary manner in which the Princess Daschkaw administered her property, both sisters were struck with the thorough rottenness of the fabric of government, both from the

economic standpoint and the political. More than once they alluded to it in their letters, remarking on the signs of the inevitable social collapse. "I look upon every Noble as an iron link in the massy chain that manacles this Realm," writes Catherine Wilmot, "and as to the Individuals amongst them that I have met at Moscow 'tis impossible to be in their Company without recollecting that they are Subjects under a Despotism, for in their judgment *bad* and *good* literally appears to be synonymous with *favour* and *disgrace*."

Throughout the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century Russia underwent a "Westernising" process at the hands of her successive rulers. The policy initiated by Peter the Great when he built a new capital upon the marshes of the Neva was conceived in a spirit of political idealism; unfortunately, like the majority of similar experiments, it was executed in a spirit of political misunderstanding. The nobles cut their hair, wore European dress, and spoke French; but it was only a veneer and the mass of the people remained essentially barbarian and Asiatic. All that Peter's policy did in reality served only to widen the breach between the two classes. The flirtation carried on by Catherine II and Alexander I with liberal ideas was only an impressive gesture to the fashionable political thought of the day, and both these rulers eventually realised that liberalism and autocracy were impossible as bed-fellows.

What Catherine and Martha really felt was the existence of a Machiavellian policy of cruelty underlying the veneer of this polished society. Looking beyond the outward shows of State banquets with beautifully dressed and fashionable women—banquets where the male guests outshone the women in the sumptuousness of their clothes—they perceived, hand in hand beneath the surface, the knout and the knife waiting for their victims.

Liberal ideas were the *hors d'œuvres* of the feast; the staple dish was cruelty and force.

The sisters may have felt uneasy in their minds; they may even have wondered how such treatment could be tolerated; but Russia, as we can see to-day, is a strange land with stranger people. They are not to be judged by Western ideas and standards; it was an error ever to have done so then, as it remains to-day. Martha and Catherine have, anyhow, succeeded in pre-

senting a picture of the system of government in operation as they saw it, and have done so vividly and well.

Before proceeding further with the narrative it is necessary to say something of the parentage of the Wilmots. They were the daughters of Anglo-Irish parents. The name of Wilmot or Wylmot is of great antiquity and distinction in England. The family to which the Wilmot sisters belonged is to be found, before the Norman Conquest, in Nottinghamshire, whence it moved to Derbyshire about the middle of the sixteenth century. On their father's side they were descended from Sir Nicholas Wilmot, a distinguished Serjeant-at-Law in the reign of Charles I and ancestor of Sir Eardley Wilmot, who was Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas 1766-1771. He was celebrated for the excellence and sagacity of his judgments, many of which have been preserved. Sir Nicholas Wilmot's son represented the borough of Derby in the first Parliament of William and Mary.

On their mother's side, through the strange irony of fate, they claimed descent from Thomas Scott the regicide who was executed along with his fellows when the Stewart monarch was restored in 1660.

Robert Wilmot, who was member for the borough of Derby, had two sons, Robert and John Eardley. Robert the elder was father of Sir Robert Wilmot, Bart., Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland 1736-1758, and also of Sir John Eardley Wilmot, the jurist and Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, just referred to. John Eardley, Robert Wilmot's younger son, had several children. A son, Robert, married into a Nottinghamshire family; he was Mrs. Bradford's grandfather. A daughter, Alicia, married the Right Reverend John Ryder, who was Archbishop of Tuam from 1752 till his death in 1775. The son, Robert, had two sons, and the fact that his cousin was Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and his sister was married to an Archbishop in that country induced him to send his sons to seek their fortunes in the country in which their kinsmen had position and influence. Robert, the elder, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and in due course became Chaplain to the 58th Regiment of Foot. Edward, the younger, joined the army.

Edward Wilmot was born in 1747, being the younger son of

Robert Wilmot and Mary, daughter of Joseph Hall, Esq., of Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire. He was well connected on his mother's side, for in 1757 her niece Hester Hall married the Earl of Sussex.<sup>1</sup> On leaving school he obtained a commission in the 40th Regiment of Foot, which was then on the Irish establishment. This regiment was stationed at Cork, and there in 1771 he married Miss Martha Moore, daughter and co-heir of the Reverend Charles Moore, Rector of Innishannon. They were married on February 11th, 1771, by the Rev. John Chetwood at Rathcooney Church, Glanmire. By her he had three sons and six daughters. A few years after his marriage Captain Wilmot retired from the army and succeeded in obtaining a post in the Revenue as Port Surveyor of Drogheda, whither he went to reside with his family. Some time afterwards, in order to be nearer his old friends and his wife's connections, he arranged to be transferred to a similar post in Cork. As he possessed some private means he was able to live very comfortably in a large house and grounds at Glanmire, near the city, where his children grew up. His eldest daughter, Catherine, was a constant visitor at Moore Park, the residence of Lord Mount Cashell, and she accompanied the second Earl and his party on a most interesting Grand Tour of the Continent, which they made after the Peace of Amiens in 1801.<sup>2</sup> Two of his sons married daughters of the local landed gentry, and he himself appears to have been exceedingly popular. Towards the close of the century he returned to Cork, where he continued to reside until after the marriage of his daughter Martha in 1812, when he transferred his household to Clifton, near Bristol, where he died in 1815, aged 68. His widow, to whom a number of the letters are addressed, survived him by some years. His eldest son, Robert, became a barrister and eventually Deputy Recorder of Cork. Robert married Elizabeth Chetwood, whose grandfather, Knightley Chetwood of Woodbrook, Queen's County, is remembered for his friendship with Swift.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Henry (Yelverton), 3rd Earl of Sussex, 1729-1799.

<sup>2</sup> She wrote an entertaining account of this tour which has been edited by Thomas U. Sadleir as *An Irish Peer on the Continent* (London, 1920).

<sup>3</sup> Robert Wilmot's son, Edward, assumed the additional surname of Chetwood in the year 1841 on inheriting the Woodbrook estate.

See "The Chetwoods of Woodbrook in the Queen's County," by W. G. Strickland, in the *Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society*, vol. ix, p. 205, *et seq.*

Catherine Wilmot, who was his eldest daughter, was born about 1773 at Drogheda, whilst Martha was born in 1775 at Glanmire.

In the eighteenth century Irish country gentlemen seldom paid much attention to the literary education of their children, sport being as a rule more highly rated than academic qualifications.

The Wilmots, contrary to this rule, seem to have spared no pains in the upbringing of their large family, and in this respect to have set their neighbours a laudable example. Martha's childhood was a happy one, since all the members of her family were devoted to each other. Her brother Charles's death in 1802 gave her, as she confessed many years later, "the first pang of misery I ever experienced." Charles, whose premature death cut short a promising naval career, was her favourite brother. At the age of nineteen he had been appointed to the command of a sloop-of-war in the West Indies, but he had scarcely reached his station when the yellow fever to which he fell a victim carried him off. Martha was overwhelmed with grief when she heard the sad news, and for weeks afterwards she was insensible to all the normal interests and occupations of her daily life—the effect of this misfortune upon her mind was "deep and deadening." But gradually she realised that she must exert herself and direct her thoughts into new channels if she wished to recover her former good spirits. Her elder sister, Catherine, was travelling in France at this time with the Mount Cashells and her letters home revived in Martha a desire to travel, which had always been one of her dearest wishes. This desire was somewhat unexpectedly gratified.

The opportunity was provided by Captain Wilmot's cousin, Mrs. Hamilton, who was a daughter of Martha's great-aunt Alicia and John Ryder, Archbishop of Tuam. Mrs. Hamilton had long been a close friend of the Princess Daschkaw, a remarkable woman who had been Director of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in St. Petersburg, corresponded with Voltaire, Diderot, Garrick and Principal Robinson, edited a monthly magazine and wrote plays! She was also one of the most active partisans in the revolution which placed the Empress Catherine II on the throne of Russia. The Princess first met Mrs. Hamilton in 1770 at Spa, whither each had gone to drink the waters, and this chance acquaintanceship, which was renewed in the following year at Aix and cemented by a joint expedition to Switzerland shortly

afterwards, had ripened into a firm and lasting friendship. Largely at Mrs. Hamilton's suggestion and as her guest the Princess visited Ireland a few years later. She crossed by packet from Portpatrick to Donaghadee, and made an expedition to the Giant's Causeway; she heard Grattan speak in the old Irish House of Commons at College Green; she explored the Lakes of Killarney; and met the Wilmots and their connections in Cork. She had indeed already made the acquaintance of Martha's father, Captain Wilmot, at the house of his cousin, Lady Sussex,<sup>1</sup> with whom the Princess had been staying shortly before, *en route* for Edinburgh to see her son, the Prince, take his degree at the University, and on this occasion she had been much impressed by his manners and conversation. She formed an excellent opinion of Irish society and she was so charmed by her reception in Ireland that she invited Mrs. Hamilton and every member of her family to visit her in Russia. Mrs. Hamilton soon afterwards availed herself of this generous invitation, and when the young Martha confided her troubles to her, after her brother's death, she immediately suggested that Martha should also visit the Princess, who had lately been permitted to return to Russia after a period of disgrace and exile which she had undergone at the outset of the reign of the Czar Paul I. The Princess herself was delighted at the idea of welcoming a relative of her old friend, and she wrote to Captain Wilmot warmly seconding the proposal. At first Captain Wilmot flatly refused his consent, but Mrs. Hamilton, upon whose judgment he had always had good cause to rely, argued the case for Martha so ably that he was finally won over and the necessary arrangements were made.

Martha Wilmot set out for Russia in the spring of 1803, travelling by road to Dublin, thence by way of the Holyhead packet and the stage coach to London. She took ship from Gravesend, passing through the Sound and the Gulf of Finland to St. Petersburg, and finally four months after she had left Ireland she reached Troitskoe, the Princess's country estate, some distance beyond Moscow, making the last stage of the journey by coach. The warm welcome which she received from her hostess com-

<sup>1</sup> Hester, daughter of John Hall of Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts., who was the brother of Edward Wilmot's mother. Hester married Henry Yelverton, 3rd Earl of Sussex.

pletely captivated her heart ; in fact the two were drawn towards each other involuntarily and every day Martha experienced some fresh kindness at the hands of the Princess. " Miss Wilmot came to visit me in Troitskoe," wrote the Princess in her *Memoirs*, " to spread around me by her conversation, by our readings together, by her sweetness and amiability, those calm pleasures which a long want of something to interest my affections and call forth the powers of my mind had now rendered doubly dear to me. Her parents had so formed her mind and character that she is, it may be truly said, an object of admiration to all who know and are capable of appreciating her." On her side Martha was fully responsive to this kindness. She kept a faithful record of her visit. Every day she used to go to the Princess in her room, where they would discuss subjects ranging from kings and emperors, history, politics and art, ending up with the harvest prospects of wheat and rye. It was anecdotes such as these that Martha was most careful to repeat in her diaries and letters. After a while she was taken on an extended tour of the country and introduced to various distinguished families. In Moscow her hand was kissed by Catherine's favourite, " the notorious Count Alexis Orloff," and other notabilities, including a Tartar prince and Platoff, the Cossack general, who actually made his regiment stage a sham battle in her honour.

Though she never quite penetrated or really understood that strange but dominant note of melancholy which is perhaps the most striking Russian trait to a foreigner, as it is the most significant feature of the national temperament, Martha Wilmot gradually grew to appreciate the extreme beauty and simplicity of Russian family life.

She remained in the country for five years as the guest of the Princess Daschkaw. It is quite evident that old Princess Daschkaw became infatuated with the brilliant young Irishwoman. Martha induced the Princess to write her *Memoirs*, which she had hitherto declined to do, and it is doubtful whether Martha would have ever left Russia during the Princess's life were it not that war had broken out between that country and England in 1808.

The Princess dedicated the work to her " young friend " and bequeathed the manuscript for publication to her also. Martha accordingly edited the *Memoirs* and translated them from the

French in which they were written, but in deference to the wishes of the Princess's brother, Count Simon Woronzow, who lived in England and objected to their publication, the *Memoirs* did not appear in print until thirty years after her death.<sup>1</sup> Their success, however, may be judged by the fact that they were immediately translated into several languages.

During the time that Martha remained in Russia she was joined by her elder sister Catherine, who had just finished her tour on the Continent with the Mount Cashells. At the express desire of Princess Daschkaw, Catherine made the journey to see the "Northern Bear," as the hostess humorously referred to herself. Catherine's previous travelling experiences, which she related to the Princess, had not been devoid of incident. She had, for instance, dined with Napoleon in the Tuileries, conversed with Grouchy on the French invasion of Ireland, acted as midwife to Lady Mount Cashell, who selected this period to add a *citizen* to the French republic, narrowly escaped death at the hands of Italian brigands, had met the licentious Bishop, Lord Bristol, in the company of his mistresses, and made friends with Angelica Kauffmann in retirement. Eclipsing everything else, she was entertained for an hour in the Vatican by His Holiness, Pope Pius VII, whose toe she unsuccessfully attempted to kiss.<sup>2</sup>

The Princess was, not unnaturally, delighted with Catherine: she could not but be full of admiration for her vivacious style and gaiety of manner, although she never idolised Catherine as she did Martha.

The attachment of the Princess towards the two sisters developed into such an infatuation that it led to their being accused by the Princess's enemies of trying to supplant her own children, not only in her affections but also in their inheritance. In fact information was laid against them and the sisters were under such a cloud of suspicion that for some time their movements were watched by spies of the Government.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw* written by herself, edited by Mrs. W. Bradford, 2 vols., London, 1840. The work also contains an interesting selection from the Princess's correspondence and a remarkable account of her visit written by the editor in the form of a letter to Lord Glenbervie.

<sup>2</sup> See *An Irish Peer on the Continent*, edited by T. U. Sadleir, London, 1920, *passim*.



Catherine has left a delightful picture of the Princess at Troitskoe in her diary and letters. "In the midst of this immense establishment and in the centre of riches and honours," she wrote, "I wish you were to see the Princess go out to take a walk or rather to look over her subjects. An old brown great coat and a silk handkerchief about her neck worn to rags is her dress; and well it may be worn to rags for she has worn it eighteen years and will continue to wear it as long as she lives because it belonged to her friend Mrs. Hamilton. There is an originality in her appearance, in her manner of speaking, in her doing every description of thing which distinguishes her from every creature I ever knew or heard of. She helps the masons to build walls, she assists with her own hands in making the roads, she feeds the cows, she composes music, she writes for the press, she talks out loud in the church and corrects the priest if he is not devout, she also talks out loud at her little theatre and puts in the performers when they are out in their parts. She is a doctor, an apothecary, a surgeon, a farrier, a carpenter, a magistrate, a lawyer; in short, she daily practises every species of incongruity; corresponds with her brother who holds the first post in the empire, with authors, with philosophers, with Jews, with poets, with her son, with all her relatives, and yet appears as if she had her time a burden on her hands. She gives me continually the idea of being a fairy; and I protest it is not jokingly that I say so, for the impression never quits me for a moment."

Catherine wrote in a lighter and more amusing vein than her sister; she was less tolerant and more critical of local conditions, whilst her powers of perception at this time were much deeper than Martha's. Before she went to Russia, Martha had never been outside Ireland, and in view of the causes which impelled her to undertake the journey it was not unnatural that on her arrival in a completely strange land she should have turned to such a dominant personality as Princess Daschkaw for protection and sympathy. Though she did not neglect any opportunities, her characteristic simplicity and gentleness entirely captivated the Princess.

In spite of the fact that Catherine's visit had been primarily undertaken with the object of bringing Martha home, as she had received explicit instructions from both her parents to bring Martha back with her, the Princess would not let her beloved

Martha leave her ; and Martha herself was unwilling to leave her cherished companion, especially as the death of the Princess's only son occurred shortly before the time of her proposed departure. Catherine was eventually obliged to set out alone, leaving Martha behind. This took place in the summer of 1807. Catherine passed through the British fleet on the very day before the bombardment of Copenhagen took place under Lord Gambier.

The actual outbreak of war between England and Russia, which followed soon afterwards, added to the suspicion with which Martha Wilmot continued to be regarded by the authorities, at length forced her to leave her "Russian Mother."<sup>1</sup> Their parting was a sad one, for though they were to correspond by letter they never met again. "Her affection for me, her tenderness and attachment were indeed unparalleled," wrote Martha, "and I sometimes think I may be considered ungrateful in ever having quitted her." She left the country loaded with gifts, for besides the Princess's Memoirs and a mass of private papers she took with her a watch of Peter the Great, a fan which the Empress Catherine had given the Princess on the evening of their first meeting, diamonds to the value of many thousand pounds, many other souvenirs and in addition a large sum of money in cash. After many difficulties and adventures, in the course of which her luggage was repeatedly searched for papers of State importance by irate customs officials, acting on Government instructions, Martha Wilmot succeeded in getting safely away, though not until she had been obliged to burn the original Memoirs and had suffered shipwreck off the coast of Finland. In these circumstances it was fortunate that her sister Catherine had managed to take a copy of the Memoirs home with her undetected, for it was from this copy that Martha was subsequently able to prepare her edition. She reached Harwich on the day after Christmas 1808. Shortly after this, Princess Daschkaw, grief-stricken at the loss of one of whom she had grown so passionately fond, and having quarrelled with her surviving daughter, fell ill and died, feeling she had nothing to live for. "How all is changed at Troitskoe"! she wrote to Martha, "the theatre is closed ; I have not had a single performance ; the pianoforte continues silent ; the *femmes de chambre* have ceased to sing. Everything paints your

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, ii, 341-342.

absence and my sorrow." She died in little over a year. Martha never heard any particulars of her death ; and she felt she could do but scant justice to the memory of her great friend. "To wear the mourning of a child for a parent during a year, which her maternal, her unbounded kindness gave me, as I conceived, the privilege of doing," wrote Martha, "was the only outward respect to her memory at that time within my power to offer." Her duty was at length fulfilled by the publication of the *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, an outspoken document which gains for its subject at least a measure of the praise to which her life-long admirer felt that she was entitled.

Martha eventually married the Reverend William Bradford, Rector of Storrington, Sussex, who later on became Chaplain to the British Embassy in Vienna. She continued her correspondence and kept journals of her doings here and elsewhere, which it is hoped to publish in another volume. She died in 1873 at the age of ninety-eight.

The letters of Catherine Wilmot possess an even greater attraction for the modern reader than Martha's. Her Continental travels with the Mount Cashell family had made her more sophisticated and self-reliant than her sister. In expressing her opinions there is a refreshing frankness which undoubtedly enhances the value of what she wrote, even if her contemporaries were occasionally offended by such unwonted freedom of speech.

She was accompanied from Cork by her maid Eleanor Cavanagh, who appears to have been a perfect specimen of the native Irish—quick-witted and natural, as the two letters written by her so ably set forth.

Some of Catherine's most characteristic letters have been included in this volume. She presents her views of people and things with undisguised candour, and she is at no pains to conceal what she dislikes.

She was more delicate than Martha, and did not enjoy so long or so full a life. She had never been particularly strong, and whilst in Russia she experienced the early stages of that dread malady consumption, which Martha politely described as asthma. "How are you to be envied," Catherine complains to a friend in one of her letters, "and every mortal alive excepting myself, who

am doomed to trundle through the Pilgrimage of life with such a deplorable drag upon the wheels of my existence!" On her return to England she found the climate too damp for her to live in any comfort, and as she possessed a small private income she was able to settle in France, where, with the exception of a few visits to a friend in England and Ireland, she remained till her death. At first she established herself in Moulins, but the increase of her illness eventually obliged her to remove to Paris. She rapidly sank, and, after lying some weeks in considerable pain, died there on March 28, 1824. The news of her death came as a great blow to Martha, whose devotion to her elder sister had always been most sincere. "If ever mortal expiated human frailty by human suffering I am sure she did," wrote Martha at the time, "nor have I a doubt of the Almighty's mercy and her present happiness. She had not the cant of religion nor perhaps had she its comforts as much as would sooth her friends to reflect upon, but her efforts were sincere, and God sees in secret which the world does not, especially those who set up systems and judge by them alone with impious presumption."

Catherine died as some thought before her time, but she left behind her the memory of a keen intellect and a charming companion. It is indeed fortunate that many of her letters have been preserved: they call to mind her sister's words, "Those bright sallies of fancy and force of expression which gave a peculiar zest and character to her conversation." "Russia is still in the fourteenth or fifteenth century," she remarked in one letter. "Yes! I know all about the luxury of Moscow and the civilization of Petersburg; but have you never seen a clumsy, romping, ignorant girl of twelve years old with a fine Parisian cap on her head? So seems to my eye this imperial realm. Five or six centuries will no doubt produce the same effects here as they have on other parts of Europe; but time must disengage the ligaments which bind the plant before it strengthens and expands into a self-supported standard—more sudden means would bend it to the earth—and so of Russian political liberty and civilization." Alexander Herzen, the Russian revolutionary writer, was particularly impressed when he read these remarks, and in his Introduction to the German edition of the *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw* he observes that "Miss Wilmot meant to say something biting but

paid us a compliment. It is only a pity that she does not see how old the girl is now ! It is not something to be reckoned in years." Herzen wrote these words in 1857, just half a century after Catherine Wilmot had expressed herself so vividly in the terms which have been quoted. Russia may not yet have reached complete maturity. The nineteenth century did, however, witness a cataclysmic jump from infancy to adolescence ; and the Revolution of our own day, by completely changing the political and social face of the country, has borne out the shrewd foresight of the Irish writer.

EDITH LONDONDERRY.

LONDONDERRY HOUSE,  
*9th February, 1934.*

*PART I*  
MARTHA WILMOT  
JOURNAL AND LETTERS FROM RUSSIA  
1803-1805



MARTHA WILMOT  
JOURNAL AND LETTERS FROM RUSSIA  
1803-1805

*From* HER JOURNAL

[CORK]

“ At five o'clock on Tuesday Morning, the 12th of April 1803, my precious Father accompanied Alicia <sup>1</sup> and me to the bottom of the Hill <sup>2</sup> where he saw us safely into the *two day* Coach under the protection of M<sup>r</sup> Green. There we separated, & with a heavy heavy heart I quitted him, and left, without a prospect of seeing again for perhaps three long years, a home that my very soul adores—my Mother far from being well, tho' much recover'd of the nervous attack which the influenza brought on. I wonder how I found courage to go thro' the scene, & can only account for it by the uncertainty I was kept in to the last hour of Alicia's being well enough to accompany me to Dublin or not, which made my quitting Home *with* her comparative bliss. No matter, tis now pass'd. I must from this moment look forward & cease to dwell too much on melancholy reflections, trusting that if the Mercy of Heaven preserves my friends & restores me to them, this temporary separation will tend to augment our future happiness. Should I be doom'd to yield up this little life of mine, I trust I shall resign my being with becoming submission & decent Hope. The deepest pang I can feel will be for their regrets, yet tis but a little span & we *shall* all meet again. Nor is it from thinking lightly of life that I say the first that goes is the happiest.

<sup>1</sup> Alicia Wilmot, one of Martha's younger sisters. She died unmarried.

<sup>2</sup> Near her father's house in St Patrick's Place, Cork.



I'm sure I *felt* its force & truth when Charles, our dear own angel Charles, was snatch'd away.<sup>1</sup>

What a beginning for a Journal! Well we stopt & breakfasted at Fermoy, the town which has been almost created by a magical touch of Mr Anderson's.<sup>2</sup> A Mr Dunn who made the fourth person in the coach took us to see a few of the shops, one in particular of which is a sort of Noah's Ark containing a little of every sort of thing. We dined at Clonmel & slept at Kilkenny. The days journey was 63 or 4 Irish miles, yet Alicia bore it with less fatigue than any of the party.

At five the following morning we again set off. Breakfasted (I think) at Carlow. The Inn & Garden were cheerful & pretty. There we met Mr Cuthbert & at Johnstown we took him into the Coach & dropt Mr Dunn who had some law business to transact as the Circuits & Assizes were going on in all parts of the country. This same Evening we arrived at the Dawson Street Hotel [Dublin]. . . .

*The following Morning, 14<sup>th</sup>*

" . . . Alicia & I went to Mr Ryder's, N<sup>o</sup> 14 Merrion Sq<sup>re</sup>.<sup>3</sup> We found Mr<sup>s</sup> Hamilton <sup>4</sup> astonishingly well, Mr Ryder as usual perfectly Stout, but Mr Oliver <sup>5</sup> & Susan <sup>6</sup> complaining.

<sup>1</sup> See above, Introduction, p. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> John Anderson, a Scotsman of poor parents who established himself as a provision merchant in Cork about 1780 and acquired a large fortune. With his wealth he built the town of Fermoy on the river Blackwater, considered by many both then and now to be "the handsomest country town in Ireland." He established the first regular mail-coach services in Ireland and converted the main roads from horse-tracks into good thoroughfares. He refused a baronetcy, but this honour was subsequently conferred upon his son James Caleb Anderson, the inventor, in 1813.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. Charles Dudley Ryder, Provost of Tuam, eldest son of John Ryder, Archbishop of Tuam, and Alicia, daughter of John Wilmot of Osmaston, Derbyshire. His mother was Martha Wilmot's grand-aunt. Had previously been Vicar of Ballywillan, County Antrim, and Prebendary of Killabegs and Killamore, County Galway. Was Provost of Tuam from 1762 till his death in 1815. He married Elizabeth Charnel of Snareston Hall, Leicestershire. Their daughter Anne married Colonel Charles Leslie of Glasslough, County Monaghan, and became the mother of Sir John Leslie, 1st Bart.

<sup>4</sup> Catherine Hamilton, sister of the Rev. Charles Dudley Ryder. She married in 1751 the Rev. Hutchinson Hamilton of Edgeworthstown, County Longford, whose mother (Frances, daughter of Francis Hutchinson,

*Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>*

" . . . Went to St Thomas's Church to hear the renown'd Kirwan preach which he did for the poor Orphan dispensary. His eloquence astonishes, his manner *frightens* rather than pleases, but he was not great that day. . . .<sup>7</sup>

*Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>*

" M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton had an interview with M<sup>r</sup> Pitcairn<sup>8</sup> on the subject of my accompanying him & his sister M<sup>rs</sup> Babbington to London. They arrang'd everything satisfactorily but the summons was so unexpected & the time so *short* that I agree'd with unspeakable reluctance to be of their party. . . .

*Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>*

" . . . Dined at dear M<sup>r</sup> Ryder's for the last time . . . and fatigued beyond expression with all the variety of business I had gone through my very heartstrings torn at the idea of parting from Alicia & quitting the friends whose kind & partial friendship was little short of parental, I at last accompanied M<sup>r</sup> Pitcairn to the deadly Coach which conveys People to the Pacquet. We arriv'd,

Bishop of Down) had married as his second wife her father, John Ryder, Archbishop of Tuam. On her husband's death soon after their marriage she travelled extensively in Europe, and it was whilst taking the waters at Spa that she made the acquaintance of Princess Daschkaw, whom she subsequently visited in Russia, remaining her life-long friend. She died in 1805. See above, Introduction, p. xiv.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. John Oliver (1763-1832), Rector of Sweptstone, Leicestershire. Nephew of Mrs Hamilton, being the eldest son of her sister Elizabeth and the Ven. John Oliver, Archdeacon of Ardagh.

<sup>6</sup> Younger sister of the Ven. John Oliver. She died unmarried in 1819.

<sup>7</sup> Walter Blake Kirwan (1754-1805), celebrated preacher and Dean of Killala. Was a convert from the Roman Catholic faith to the Established Church. Made his name as a preacher in both London and Dublin. The churches in which he officiated had to be defended by guards and palisades against the pressure of the crowds who came to hear him, and his services were consequently much in demand for charity sermons. On these occasions it was not uncommon for the collection taken up to exceed £1000, and women frequently threw their jewellery on to the offertory plate. A volume of his sermons was published posthumously in 1816.

<sup>8</sup> David Pitcairn (1749-1809) Scottish physician. As doctor to St Bartholomew's Hospital in London he was the first to discover that valvular disease of the heart was a frequent result of rheumatic fever. Martha Wilmot found him "gentlemanlike in look and manner" and possessed of "a good deal of very pleasant conversation."

got on board & a heavy sleep snatch'd me from all my distresses. For some little time the water was very smooth, & I was not near so ill as usual. The passage was a glorious one, 9 hours, & on

Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup>, we landed at Holyhead. After refreshing ourselves a little by changing our dresses we breakfasted, & then got into a post chaise, & drove to Caerwen, from thence to Bangor, cross'd the Ferry & went to the pretty little Inn, but being unable to procure beds or even two Chaises we were obliged to proceed in a Coach accompanied by two of our ship companions over the famous Mountain Penmenmore &c to Conway where we gladly retired to rest. . . .

Early on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> we were awoke by the delightful Sounds of the Welsh Harp. We then walk'd to the beautiful ruins of Conway Castle, built by one of the Edwards after the extermination of the Welsh Barons as a place of defence against the possibility of future attempts to regain their power.

Our drive to Llanwrst was very pretty ; in some parts it was grand. There we breakfasted, & proceeded thro' sublime scenery of Mountain rising above Mountain, Rocks, Water, Wood, Hills, Valleys &c. &c. to Conicogne at which place we chang'd Horses & proceeded to Corwen where we took a snack, & again got into Chaises with the hope of reaching Llangollen by daylight. In this however we did not succeed but the Moon shone most splendidly bright by way of compensation. . . .

26<sup>th</sup>

" We got up before 6 o'clock in order to see as much of the Grounds &c belonging to Lady Eleanor Butler & Miss Ponsonby's celebrated retreat as strangers are allow'd to visit.<sup>1</sup> I must confess

<sup>1</sup> Lady Eleanor Butler (1739-1829) and Miss Sarah Ponsonby (1755-1831), generally known as "the Ladies of Llangollen." Having vowed eternal friendship to each other they ran away from their homes in Ireland in 1778 and settled in a cottage at Plas Newydd in the Vale of Llangollen, whither they lived together in singular seclusion for over fifty years. Noted for their mutual devotion and eccentric habits. They never spent a night out of their cottage, and such was their reputation that distinguished travellers from all parts of the world made a point of visiting them. Wellington, Castlereagh, De Quincy, Scott and Madame de Genlis were numbered amongst their particular friends. Prince Puckler-Muskau called them "the most celebrated virgins in Europe." Their diaries have recently been published. See *The Hamwood Papers of the Ladies of Llangollen*, edited by G. H. Bell. (London, 1931.)

neither the Cottage, Grounds, nor Situation answer'd my expectations. The Cottage appear'd on the outside more distinguish'd by a stiff & formal effect than by taste and elegance, & the situation does not convey an idea of that romantic seclusion which their singular flight from the World leads one to expect. In short my imagination had pictured something very peculiar & of a different nature from what I saw. The scenery however is very fine, bold, rocky & mountainous with a beautiful river running thro' a Valley &c. &c.

Lord Trevor's Place & Sir Watkin Williams Wynn's (Winsty) are very near Llangollen. A noble aqueduct is carrying on there which crosses the river *over it*—strange triumph of Art over Nature! We breakfasted at Oswestry, & proceeded *still* thro' highly cultivated & enchanting country till we arrived at Shrewsbury. . . . \*

*Thurs<sup>d</sup> 27<sup>th</sup>*

" . . . We stop'd to luncheon at Stratford on Avon. This Town is celebrated as the birth place of Shakespear. We visited the House in which he was born. It is now inhabited by a Butcher & his Wife who preserve as sacred relics the old wooden Armchair & wooded bookcase which he used, & upstairs the bench, small iron chest, & pedigree &c. &c. which once belong'd to him. These remain in the same room in which he was born. Mr Pitcairn added our names to those of many other travellers, whom curiosity or reverence for our Immortal Poet had drawn to the same obscure & humble habitation. . . . We proceeded by Blenheim to Woodstock. . . .

Early on the 28<sup>th</sup> we walk'd to Blenheim House, the Duke of Marlborough's magnificent dwelling. It is the grandest pile of building I ever beheld ; including the courts it covers *seven* acres of ground. Opposite to the Hall door is an Obelisk to commemorate the famous John Duke of Marlborough, Queen Anne's great warrior. The old Porter show'd us the place where Queen Mary kept her sister Queen Eliz<sup>th</sup> confined, & likewise fair Rosamond's Bower (Mistress to King Henry 2<sup>d</sup>). We were unfortunately some hours too early to see the inside of the House, but thro' the windows we saw the painted ceiling where John D. of M. is

crown'd by *Victory* who points to a plan of the battle of Blenheim—this painting was executed by Sir James Thornhill. I was charm'd with the Grandeur & Magnificence of Blenheim, both House and grounds.

Eight miles farther on the Reverend Town of Oxford attracts attention. The observatory is the first object that strikes the eye & a beautiful building it is. We breakfasted in a most agreeable cheerful looking room furnish'd with prints & afterwards visited the Colleges. Oh, the stain'd glass Window at the New Chapel ! designed by Sir Joshua Reynolds & executed by Jarvis. . . . We visited all the Colleges, the Librarys, Halls for dining &c. &c. walk'd thro' the *Academic Shades*, & after spending several hours in a most interesting and agreeable manner we return'd to the Inn. . . .

TO HER SISTER HARRIET <sup>1</sup>

LONDON, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1803

“ . . . Yes, Harriet you must respect me henceforth as a great Classical *Scholar*, for I certainly have passed thro' the University of Oxford—and what a pile of building it is ! . . .

Our journey that day was shorter than usual, and we slept within twenty-two miles of London at a beautiful inn call'd Salt Hill. We there dispers'd our Cash to prepare for Hounslow Heath, but happily our precautions proved unnecessary—we saw no Robbers, but what was almost as bad we saw no royal family going to Windsor, a *Lyon* we expected and shou'd have seen had we been two hours later. And now Harriet I rode like the Taylor from Brentford to Kew bridge, and lord knows how many two-penny Towns in the environs of London, till at last we turn'd into Hyde Park, and so thro' a few streets to N<sup>o</sup> 9 Portman Street Portman Squ<sup>re</sup> where I was affectionately received by Aunt Copley.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Harriet Wilmot later married James Garnier of Barbadoes. She had issue, a daughter Martha who died unmarried.

<sup>2</sup> Alice Copley, daughter of Robert Wilmot of Osmaston, Derbyshire, and Mary, daughter of John Hall of Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts. Her youngest brother Edward was Martha Wilmot's father. She married Thomas Copley of Nether Hall, Doncaster.

*From HER JOURNAL**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> [May]*

" I got up at 8 o'clock and wrote for a short time. . . . Walk'd in Kensington Gardens with Aunt Copley, Mr Pitcairn, Mr Erdley Wilmot<sup>1</sup> & Mr Banggy. Met there that most amiable & engaging looking Mr<sup>s</sup> Wilmot & three of the sweet unaffected girls.<sup>2</sup> I was delighted with Kensington Gardens, the grounds are beautiful. But I know of no other Garden that exhibits such a variety of fairest flowers and most dashing beau monde as Kensington on a fine Sunday—tis delightful to see so many gay & happy looking faces. I know no scene to which I would more fondly present a foreigner as a specimen of public domestic happiness.

*To HER FATHER EDWARD WILMOT**PORTMAN STREET, 17 of May 1803*

" . . . On Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> I waited on the Russian Ambassador by appointment. Uncle Copley and I proceeded to Harley Street. He, good natured Man, had left his ticket before and was not unknown. He therefore stept forward, bow'd profoundly to his Excellency and Mons<sup>r</sup> the Interpreter, and then presented me his niece. Count Worontzow is an elderly mild tall yellow looking Man.<sup>3</sup> He immediately advanc'd and say'd

<sup>1</sup> John Eardley Wilmot (1757-1815), Master in Chancery, of Bruce Castle, Tottenham, Middlesex. Younger son of Sir John Eardley Wilmot, Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas. Was a second cousin of Martha's father, Edward Wilmot, being related through Robert Wilmot (1640-1722) of Osmaston, M.P. for Derby, who was their great-grandfather. Author of several pamphlets on legal and political subjects; also published his father's *Memoirs*. He married (1) Frances, only daughter of Samuel Sainthill, by whom he had a son and four daughters; (2) Sarah, daughter of Colonel Haslam, by whom he had no issue. His only son, Sir John Eardley Wilmot, 1st Bart., became Governor of Tasmania, but was superseded after a few years of office "in consequence of his supposed indifference to the morals of the convicts under his charge."

<sup>2</sup> Second wife of John Eardley Wilmot, and daughters by his first wife.

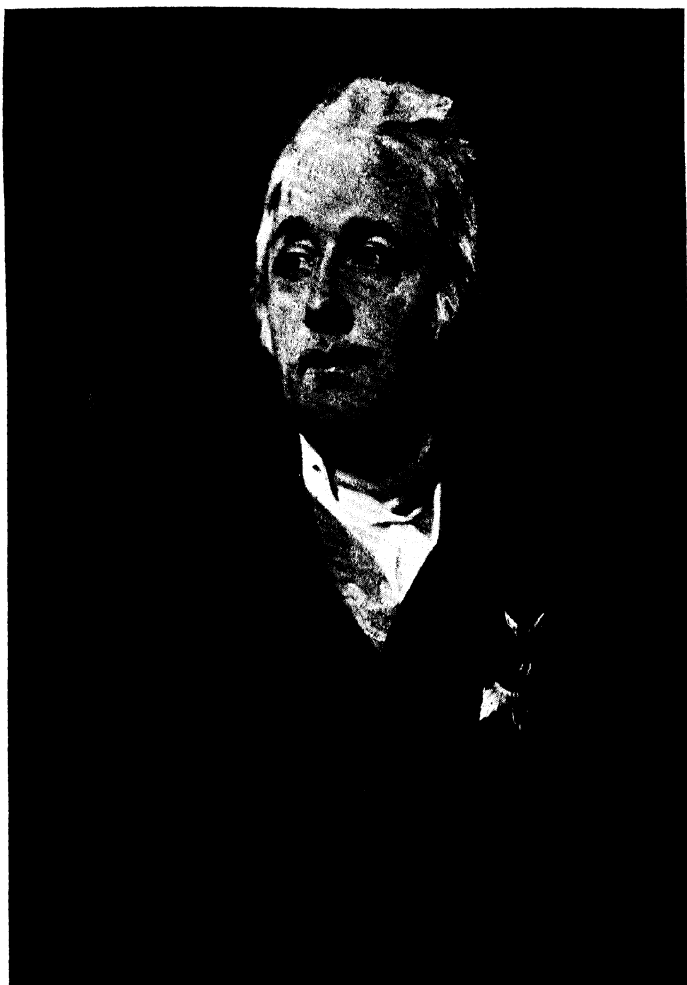
<sup>3</sup> Count Simon Romanovich Woronzow (1744-1832), Russian Ambassador to England. Early in Catherine II's reign he had distinguished himself fighting in the Turkish Wars, before entering the diplomatic service. During a long embassy in London, which lasted with one small break from 1785 to 1806, and a longer residence which continued till his

'apparáment Mad<sup>lle</sup> spoke de french'. Mad<sup>lle</sup> say'd 'un peu'. He then led me to a sophá while Uncle Copley and Mons<sup>r</sup> Interpreter occupied a second. I then told him in French, I had the honor of presenting him with a Letter from Lord Carysfort.<sup>1</sup> He put on his spectacles, read it, and told me 'any thing that lay in his power, he shou'd be happy to do; he wou'd give me a passport, a letter to the Admiral at Cronstadt and one or two more to friends of his in Petersburg'. I told him I should be happy if I cou'd be useful in conveying any letter or parcel to the Princess either for him or his daughter Countess Worontzow. Upon this he enquir'd whether I shou'd remain in Town during my stay in England, as the Countess wou'd be happy to make my acquaintance. This and a few more civilitys concluded the Visit. . . .

The Russian Chaplain M<sup>r</sup> Smirnove has call'd upon us here; and seems to take an interest for me I cou'd not have expected. The Elderly lady who is going to see her daughter at Petersburg he told us is a M<sup>rs</sup> Delamain under whose care I cou'd go in the most agreeable manner, dat he was very sure Mad<sup>lle</sup> wou'd much like his contree, and she wou'd be relish'd there. He gave me a list of things to procure, such as blankets, sheets, pillow, and perhaps Bed—as for Wearables English Clothing is the most admir'd—but I must get a Rug Cloak, and Worsted Stockings with a few other light summer articles. . . .

death he enjoyed immense popularity and influence and came thoroughly to appreciate British institutions. A strong legitimist and opponent of the French Revolution he lived on close terms of friendship with Pitt and Grenville. He was chiefly instrumental in preventing England from materially assisting the Turks during Catherine's second Turkish War, and later in securing a renewal of the Anglo-Russian commercial treaty in 1793. Like his sister Princess Daschkaw he was disgraced by the Czar Paul I and his estates were confiscated, but Alexander I reinstated him on his succession to the throne. He was obliged to resign his embassy owing to ill health in 1806 but remained in London till his death twenty-five years later. The thoroughfare in the neighbourhood of St John's Wood where he lived has been called Woronzow Road after him. He married in 1780 Catherine, daughter of Admiral Alexis Seniavine. By his wife, who died in 1784, he had two children: Michael, who became Field-Marshal Prince Woronzow and Governor of South Russia, and Catherine, who married George, 11th Earl of Pembroke.

<sup>1</sup> John (Proby), 1st Earl of Carysfort (1751-1828), diplomat and poet. His wife was a sister of George, 1st Marquis of Buckingham. His cousin, *née* Elizabeth Proby, was married to Admiral Tchichagov, the Russian Minister of Marine. See below, p. 167, note.



COUNT SIMON WORONZOW

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR IN ENGLAND

*From the portrait by George Romney in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad*





A few days ago I receiv'd an official letter from lord Hawkesbury's Office<sup>1</sup> to Sir John B. Warren, English Ambassador &c. This is a matter of great importance it seems. It came thro' Mr<sup>s</sup> Hamilton's friend Countess Bruhle's interest who added a letter of her own to a friend at Petersburg.

*From HER JOURNAL*

19<sup>th</sup> [May]

" . . . Proceeded to John St<sup>t</sup> where I was most affectionately wellcom'd by half the family, the others being out. . . .<sup>2</sup>

25<sup>th</sup> [May]

" . . . A party was suddenly fix'd for going to the Play at the little Theatre in the Haymarket. Mr & Mr<sup>s</sup> W[il提高], Maria, Selena & me. The Royal Family were there, & I saw my Sovereign & witness'd the burst of loyalty & pleasure which they excited with stronger emotions than I thought I should at the eve of this dreadful War. 'Tis pleasant to see how true the Britons are to their King & Country. The Princesses are lovely women ; the Princess Amelia in particular strikes me as charming—their dignity & grace blended with affability in saluting the Audience was charming, & in short I was delighted with them. . . .

26<sup>th</sup> [May]

" . . . We proceeded to Westminster bridge w<sup>ch</sup> we walk'd over & went into Westminster Hall where law business is sometimes transacted. Peep'd into the Court of King's bench and saw Mr Erskine the great pleader.<sup>3</sup> Saw the Houses of Lords & Commons which are much the Shabbyest buildings of a public nature in London. We then visited the Abbey, Monuments of Johnson, Garrick &c &c &c, in the Chapel the banners of the Knights

<sup>1</sup> The Foreign Office, whose chief at this time was Robert (Jenkinson), Lord Hawkesbury, later 2nd Earl of Liverpool. As Lord Liverpool Hawkesbury was Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827.

<sup>2</sup> The family of Martha Wilmot's relative, John Eardley Wilmot. See above, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Erskine (1750-1823), Whig lawyer and politician; later Lord Chancellor. Had just returned from a visit to France, where Napoleon, who was ignorant of his reputation, offended him by asking, "Etes-vous légiste?"

newly invested in the order of the Bath. Visited & admired the Monument of Mr<sup>s</sup> Nightingale & various others, but the greater part of the building appears to me a beautiful piece of mouldring gothic architecture & the waxen images of Queen Elizabeth, L<sup>d</sup> Chatham &c I dislike particularly. Met the Duke & Dutchess of York arm in arm visiting the Monuments, the Duke very handsome, she not at all so. . . .

TO HER SISTER HARRIET

JOHN STREET, LONDON, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1803

“ . . . I am in high spirits and feel half a Russian already. I have met with so many people, Women as well as Men who have been in Russia *twice* and *three* times that I begin to think no more of the Voyage than of one from England to Ireland. . . .

You will not be satisfied if I omit any of my adventures. Know then that I had occasion to write to Count Worontzow for my passport, and took it myself to Harley Street in Mr<sup>s</sup> Wilmot's Carriage. We chose to wait five minutes to ascertain the great Man's receiving it, when low and behold, he sent down his Secretary with a very gentlemanlike apology at not being disengaged at the moment to request to see me, but beg'd I would honour him with my company at dinner on the following Saturday. My *mauvaise honte* made me cruel enough to plead pre-engagement, but before I was dress'd next Morning came a Note in french requesting I would appoint either friday or Sunday to go. I answer'd by a very Elegant Note in french (for my sweet kind Mr<sup>s</sup> Wilmot arranged it) of compliance, and Sunday was the day appointed.

Figure me now to yourself dress'd out by these dear girls. Selena did my hair most beautifully with a ringlet like the Princess Amelia's who is famous for shining hair you must know—Bell made a tucker—Maria overlook'd the business and nodded approbation or the contrary according to her feelings &c. How ridiculous? But I want to give you an idea of this family. Well my Gown was a new frock shape with work'd Muslin inserted down the front &c. &c. At half after five I reach'd the drawing room door. My friend Mr Smirnov was the first object I beheld. The Count was not in the room, but there was a Lady and some gentle-

men. The Lady address'd me in french and in about five minutes the Count appear'd leading in his daughter Mad<sup>lle</sup> la Countess, a sweet looking elegant smallish figure, graceful brunet of past nineteen to whom he presented me, and she instantly addressed me in *English* in a manner that at once proved her truly Well bred.<sup>1</sup> She then presented a Lady who came into the room with her, a Miss Jourdinier who lives with her and about whom there is a sentimental story that speakes Volumes in favour of the Count and his Daughter. The first lady proved to be a M<sup>dm</sup> Kirkoff a Russian lady. Her husband was in the room, and some other rather uninteresting Men, foreigners of course.

Well a brown muzzled man came in to say '*on a servi*'. The Count led M<sup>dm</sup> Kirkoff down, and we all follow'd. She sat on his right and I on his left hand. Soup was handed round, and four cover'd dishes remain'd on the table. One of them was taken away and a servant handed round ready carved Ducks. Another was removed then ready carved bouillé, ready carved fricasées &c. &c. In short not less than 12 or 14 rounds of this kind. The Countess told me to help myself to wine if I liked it, as nobody was asked to hobnob. At length fruits became stationary on the Table, and Wine. After we had sat literally twenty minutes, Count W. rose, took M<sup>dm</sup> Kirkoff under the arm, and we all return'd to the drawing room. I never was so astonished, nor do

<sup>1</sup> Countess Catherine Simonovna Woronzow (1783-1856), later Countess of Pembroke. Only daughter of Count Simon Woronzow. Was a remarkable linguist and musician, and at the age of twelve translated a French tragedy into Russian. In 1808 she married as his second wife George Augustus (Herbert), 11th Earl of Pembroke. After her marriage Lady Pembroke became a leading figure in London society. In 1817 she and her husband entertained the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia, later Czar Nicholas I, and for this occasion she had her children all dressed in Russian costume. Their eldest son, born in 1810, was the Hon. Sydney Herbert, later 1st Lord Herbert of Lea, who as Secretary-at-War worked so effectively with Miss Florence Nightingale to improve conditions in the hospitals during the Crimean War. Lady Pembroke was no ordinary woman. Her son's biographer, Lord Stanmore, has written of her: "To the possession of her more feminine attributes of wit, humour and practical good sense, she added a man's breadth of view and strength of will. But the masculine vigour of her mind did not in the least impair the exquisite tenderness of heart or diminish the wealth of her affection and unselfishness. She was idolised, and justly idolised, by all her children, who found in her not only the most loving of mothers but the most shrewd and practical of advisers." Her last years were saddened by the war which broke out between the country of her birth and that of her adoption. See Lord Stanmore, *Memoir of Sydney Herbert*, vol. ii, p. 34.

I as yet like the plan entirely. I think Men's sitting long is a fault, but I do not dislike separation for a time.

At dinner I was placed between the Count and his daughter, and convers'd alternately in french and English. The Count actually convers'd and question'd me concerning Ireland as if he had lived in the different countys of it, and alluded to the prevailing prejudices peculiar to the different Countys as if he had witness'd them. In the course of conversation I was asked my Christian name which is to be inserted in my Passport, and I find I am to be called *Matra Edwardovna*, which is Martha the daughter of Edward. On taking leave both the Count and Countess express'd their hopes of seeing me again in Harley Street, and in short never was anything more polite.

#### *To HER MOTHER*

LONDON, 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1803

"I am now kept in a constant bustle. One time I thought I should have gone to-day, another time the 13<sup>th</sup>, then the 17<sup>th</sup>—in short I do not yet know when I am to go, and what vexes me is that from this moment I cannot even wish any more letters to be directed to me in London, lest I shou'd be gone before they cou'd arrive. My great anxiety now is to have letters address'd to me in Russia.

. . . Yesterday I received a letter from Count Worontzow inviting me to dine with him & the Countess, but I was engaged. So I call'd by way of a take leave visit in the morning, and never was anything so polite as Countess W. She rung my hand at parting and told me she not only wish'd me a pleasant voyage, but should be particularly happy if I would let her hear of my safe arrival. She is a most Elegant young Woman, and her Character as well as her father's is first rate. The becoming known to that family is really quite a pleasure to me.

As for these kindly affectionate Wilmots, the unremitting proofs of friendship I receive from them are boundless. M<sup>rs</sup> Wilmot declares she will not trust me to pack up my own trunks, and from their Cellar I am to be provided with Wine and Brandy for the Voyage, I fear I am a sad plague to them going such a voyage. A thousand things of a troublesome nature must arise. . . .



COUNTESS CATHERINE WORONZOW

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE

*From the portrait by Sir Henry Raeburn formerly in the Woronzow  
Palace in Odessa*



LONDON, 12<sup>th</sup> of June

“ Letters are pouring in on me—six to-day from Count Worontzow and his lovely daughter with one from the Countess to me, penn’d by Elegance itself. I do admire that girl. . . .

GRAVESEND, Monday 13<sup>th</sup> [June]

“ Here I am just arrived and this evening we go on board ; that excellent Mr Justice and my dearest Edward came with me. . . .

Mr Justice has been on board, and made my Bed Comfortable himself. Edward, my precious Edward has been also on board.<sup>1</sup> They tell me everything is arranged in the most comfortable manner. . . .

IN YARMOUTH ROADS. Sunday Evening,  
19<sup>th</sup> June 1803

“ . . . If to-morrow is favourable we may possibly go on shore. We are close to it—there is also a chance of our going into Hull. Our Convoy consists of more than Sixty Sail, but this retards our progress. This Evening is charming, and you may perceive from the *tolerable* steadiness of my writing how well I am—in fact I cou’d not have conceived it possible to have been six days on board a small and rather inconvenient Ship without having experienc’d more than half an hour’s illness. And tho’ my Berth is not perfum’d with attar of roses or essence of Jessamine but the well known *tincture* of *bilge* Water, yet I protest I scarcely lay my head upon the Pillow at ten o’clock till I fall into a profound Slumber from which I am with difficulty arous’d by the sonorous Pipe of Mrs Delamaine at past eight the next Morning. My companions and I get on very well. The Captain seems a truly Worthy attentive, Honest creature. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Martha Wilmot’s second brother, Edward Eardley Wilmot, at this time a cadet at Woolwich. He later served as an artillery officer throughout the Peninsular War, and particularly distinguished himself by putting a large number of enemy guns out of action in the course of the Walcheren expedition. He married Mary, daughter of Daniel Conner of Ballybricken, County Cork, by whom he had three children. Of these a daughter Isabella married (1) John Hartpole Lecky, father of the historian W. E. H. Lecky, and (2) Thomas (Dalzell), 10th Earl of Carnwath.



23<sup>rd</sup>

“ Still in Yarmouth roads and quite uncertain as to the time of our proceeding. It is very tiresome, but we are getting on as well as 'tis possible for us to do in a Ship rocking at anchor, and sometimes reeling from one side of the Cabin to the other like so many tipsy pilgarliks. . . .<sup>1</sup>

What we are waiting for we don't know. Our patience is put to a severe trial, for we are station'd just opposite to a pretty little Village call'd Goldney and the Town of Yarmouth and can, thro' the Glass, see people walking on the Beech, and yet we are unable to go on shore from the violence of the Weather which is very unnatural for the season. Wou'd do most famously if we were at sea, but lying at anchor as we are is the deuce. We laugh at each other. . . .

30<sup>th</sup>

“ We are this moment getting under weigh to proceed to the Humber. I must have the satisfaction of telling you so at the moment it is happening—but now good bye till we reach Hull please God.

Prosperous Gales to us !

#### TO HER FATHER AND MOTHER

GOOD INTENT. *Sunday Evening, 10<sup>th</sup> July 1803*

“ With the *Good Intent* of reaching Elsinour in a few hours, I have tumbled down to my Cabbin to tell my dear friends all about it before the Captain goes on shore to put our letters into the Post Office, to pay his toll, and so return to Waft us to fair Petersburg City—but how I can hold my pen to tell you is the Wonder, worn as I am and my Table sloping almost to the ground, the breezes are so strong as well as favorable. This Day week I wrote from Hull since which the Journal of my life may be comprised in three words, ‘ *Squalmish—Squeemish—Sick* ’. Come don't believe me. Squalmish on Thursday, Misery personified

<sup>1</sup> Pilgarlic, lit. peeled garlic, i.e. “ poor fellow ” shabbily or fantastically dressed.

on Friday, better Saturday, and quite well Sunday. This is the true state of the case. I could not have believed it possible to make such a voyage with so little suffering. And tho' the Convoy retarded our progress a good deal, yet 150 Ships in company clothed the dreary expanse of Waters with an appearance of gaiety and sublimity that very much lessen'd the horrors of singly ploughing the Main, and frequently presented a beautiful Variety of appearances.

Last night we had what I thought a very tremendous Gale attended by thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain. My noble courage was a little cast down for a short time, but the wonders and terrors of the Deep are only to be equal'd by the wonders and joys which succeed a strong Gale of Wind. These brave fellows make so light of all dangers to which they expose themselves and drink their *Grog* and dry their cloathes to encounter the next with so much glee and thoughtlessness of the future; while the powers they exert during the time of danger appear more than human to those who see the effects and cannot understand almost the language they use. The breeze I speak of Yesterday evening lasted about an hour, soon after which I went to Bed, and (will my Mother believe me) I slept profoundly till three loud raps at my Bedstead summon'd me to prepare for breakfast. . . .

Farewell till I see this same Elsineur.

Since my last letter, a dreary expanse of Water is all I have beheld, except a dark barren looking Rock or Land which we are just coming to, for which I am to pay the Sea Men a bottle of Gin or Brandy or be sowed like a Gurnet into the briney Wave. The name of this headland is Koll.

10 o'clock. We have pass'd by the Castle of Elsineur and have on board one of the sailors who was on board Adm<sup>l</sup> Nelson's fleet when that famous action was fought.<sup>1</sup> He points out the place where they were fired on &c. &c. &c. The Castle is a very pretty object from the Water. Indeed the country on each side and the appearance of the Town &c. is excessively pretty, and to us more cheering than I can tell. Even the Smell of the Land is so. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Copenhagen was bombarded and the Danish fleet in the Sound destroyed by the English admirals Nelson and Parker on April 2, 1801.

## TO HER FATHER AND MOTHER

GULPH OF FINLAND. *Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 1803*

“ To-morrow we expect please God to reach Cronstadt, and in a few hours after to arrive at St. Petersburg. . . . But I must give you my history journalwise ; and to take it up after sealing my letter [dated 10<sup>th</sup> July] to you, the next thing I did was to ask the Captain whether he wou’d go on shore the next day as a leading question to : Will you take me ? for you must know the going with him was a grand favour, and I flatter myself granted only to *prime favorites*. He quickly perceiv’d my intention, and as he had very good reasons for not wishing all the party to go he gave us to understand that the Weather was unfavourable and the passage to the Shore very dangerous. At the same time a slip of paper inform’d me that if I would be resolute in taking the business of going on Shore and all its hazzards upon myself, he shou’d be happy to oblige me. Accordingly I declared myself a Heroine, and as my companions were terrified by the sound of the wind, the business was easily arrang’d.

Off we set at six o’clock on Monday Morning and in less than half an hour reach’d this famed Town where my Mother’s Pet Hamlet the Dane was educated. The Castle stands boldly forward, and is the only building worth naming. The rest of the Town is very insignificant. We proceeded to the House of some friend of Cap<sup>n</sup> Clark’s where we regaled ourselves with tea and Coffee, rolls &c and above all enjoy’d a steady footing. The Lady of the House spoke English very tolerably. There I met another Damsel, Daughter to one of the Captains of our Convoy, who like me had stept on shore for a few hours. We sallied forth with a Danish Guide to see the Lions. He took us to a walk shaded by Trees which is the beau walk of the place. But the surprising thing was to see how naturally the trees grow and the Grass &c out of England and little Ireland ! The Danish people are not distinguish’d from the English by anything striking, the complection &c being much the same. The dress of the lower orders of Women is characterised by a never ending Variety of fancy in the headdress and Jacket—not so their Horses, Carts or Waggons. A Horse trotting thro’ Elsinour might easily be mistaken for a well grown Cat ; and two of them abreast draw a

Waggon to Market (little better than a Wheel-barrow) with all the pomp of reins and traces, the Charioteer being generally a Woman who smartly drives the Goods to Market while her Sluggish Spouse smokes his long pipe at home and chews tobacco—if a neighbor comes in he salutes him with three deliberate and well arrang'd Kisses. I misbehaved once, and who cou'd help it when I saw a tall thin Man take a tobacco pipe out of his Mouth and gravely wait the approach of a little puffy Captain of a Ship who slip'd a quid into the other cheek and standing on tiptoe three times made the place resound with the thunder of his Kiss. I cou'd not help laughing—but I'm told I shall see this Ceremony perform'd in higher circles before I stop.

The Lyons of Elsinour were soon seen, and the Captain's business soon done, after which we were obliged to return to our Ship and instantly set sail. We pass'd the very spot where the Gallant action was fought at Copenhagen. A sailor on board was one of lord Nelson's crew at the time, and gave us a very interesting account of it, poor fellow. This is all worth mentioning that occur'd. On the following Wednesday the wind chang'd against us, and blew a gale ; we were oblig'd to remain in Bed, *Miserable Wretches* as ever were seen. The picture of a Ship's Cabin in such circumstances, not being the most agreeable in the World, I will not attempt a description of it, but leave it to your fancy. On Sunday we got better, and on Monday quite well ; but while I write the Table shakes to such a degree that if you can make out what I intend to say, you will have better eyes than I shou'd have if I began to read it.

Now good-bye till we reach Cronstadt. We must prepare to beautify as we are to go in a body headed by the Captain to give an account of ourselves, with our Passports in our hands, to the Custom House Watch Dogs. . . .

*Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>*

“ After I had written the above, the wind chang'd, and detained us another day. Here we are however now safe and well, thank God, within the Mole at Cronstadt, after a Voyage better in every respect than my most sanguine expectations pictured.

Captain Clark went on Shore very early, and by him I sent a letter address'd to a M<sup>r</sup> Booker our English agent, inclosed in a

note announcing our safe arrival. I have this moment received an answer from him, politely requesting I would dine with him to-day, and that his carriage shall wait my orders at the waters edge. Mrs Delamain and I are rigging ourselves in our best attire to go ; not that we shall dine there probably, as I believe we shall proceed to St Petersburg this Evening ; but we must go to shew ourselves literally for this is necessary. Mr Booker likewise sent me a letter from Mr<sup>s</sup> Hamilton's friend Doctor Rogerson kind and friendly indeed, answering the one I wrote from London, and informing me that M. and M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky had been expecting me for some time in consequence of letters they had from Princess Dashkoff<sup>1</sup> ; that M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky was a very charming woman, and they all look'd out for my arrival at St Petersburg with anxiety for my safety &c. &c.

<sup>1</sup> Princess Catherine Daschkaw (1743-1810), Russian *littérature*, Director of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in St Petersburg and first President of the Russian Academy. Third daughter of Count Roman Woronzow and Martha, daughter of M. Ivan Surmine and divorced wife of Prince Youri Dolgorouky. Born in St Petersburg, where the Empress Elizabeth held her before the font at her baptism and the Grand Duke Peter (later Czar Peter III) was her godfather. Since her mother died when she was two years old and her father was a man of pleasure she was brought up in the house of her uncle, the Imperial Chancellor Count Michael Woronzow, whose well-known political and literary interests she commenced to share at an early age. No pains were spared in her education. She studied mathematics at the University of Moscow, she read widely in foreign literature, and these qualifications, added to a handsome figure and a natural aptitude for learning languages, enabled her to grow up to be one of the most accomplished and attractive young women about the Court. At the age of fifteen she was introduced to the Grand Duchess Catherine (later the Empress Catherine II), who was impressed by her intellectual ability, and the two became firm friends, corresponding almost daily for some years in spite of the fact that Princess Daschkaw's sister Elizabeth Woronzow was the acknowledged mistress of Catherine's husband Peter both when he was Grand Duke and Czar. In the Revolution of 1762, which dethroned Peter III in favour of his wife, Prince Daschkaw played a conspicuous part, though by no means so important as she has represented in her *Memoirs*. Moreover, she was not the unscrupulous *intriguante* that she appears in the writings of several contemporaries, showing on the contrary a remarkable *naïveté* in her romantic championship of Catherine's cause which rendered her to a certain extent the dupe of her friend's stronger character. For her services during the *coup d'état* she was rewarded by the Empress with the Order of St Catherine and gifts of money and estates. She might now have exercised a great influence at Court, but her want of tact, particularly in refusing to approve of Catherine's *liaison* with the prime mover in the Revolution, Prince Gregory Orloff, obliged her to retire from public life shortly afterwards. She spent the next fifteen years improving her extensive landed

*Thursday Evening*

" Before I go to bed I must add the history of to-day. Soon after I bid you adieu we got into a little Boat and row'd to the town of Cronstadt. There we landed and got into M<sup>r</sup> Booker's coach. We first drove to admiral Hanicoff's who was all politeness in consequence of Count Worontzow's letter, offer'd his Boat to go up to S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg, or his carriage to drive about the town &c.<sup>1</sup> Both I refused with all proper politeness on my side ; and

property and travelling in foreign countries for the benefit of her health and her children's education. She visited the principal European Courts, and the friends which she made in the course of her travels included the French philosophers Voltaire and Diderot, the Prussian king Frederick the Great, the Scottish historian Robertson, the English actor Garrick, and the Irish " blue-stocking " Lady Arabella Denny. In 1782 she was recalled to Court and appointed by Catherine II Director of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in St Petersburg, and two years later first President of the Russian Academy which was founded at her suggestion. During her term of office, which lasted for the remaining fourteen years of the Empress's reign, she encouraged scientific research, added considerably to the Academy's publications, and promoted the first dictionary of the Russian language, which appeared under her direction. At the same time she also edited a monthly magazine, wrote a number of plays, and continued to manage several large estates. On the accession of Czar Paul I in 1796 she was dismissed and banished to a distant estate, where she was ordered, in the words of the imperial ukase, " to meditate on the events of 1762." Through her son's influence this punishment was later mitigated and she was allowed to reside at Troitskoe, her favourite estate near Moscow. She was living here at the time of Martha Wilmot's arrival in Russia, though she was no longer under any restriction, having been again received at Court by the Czar Alexander I after Paul's assassination in 1801.

She married in 1759 Prince Michael Daschkaw, an officer in the Imperial Guards, and lived happily with him till his sudden death on active service six years later. Of her three children, Anastasia, the eldest, married General Scherbenin ; Michael, her second, died in infancy ; and Paul, the youngest, became a general in the Russian army. As Mme. Scherbenin was disinherited and Prince Paul Daschkaw predeceased his mother the bulk of her estates passed under her will to her nephew Count Michael Woronzow (later General Prince Woronzow, Governor of South Russia) and to Count Ivan Woronzow, grandson of her uncle, Count Ivan Woronzow, who took the name of Woronzow-Daschkaw in accordance with her wishes. Her *Memoirs*, carefully edited by Martha Wilmot, then Mrs Bradford, were published in London in 1840. They attracted considerable attention in international literary circles at the time and were later translated into several European languages.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Khanycoff (1743-1813), Russian admiral and naval Governor of Cronstadt. First served as a midshipman in the British fleet in Spanish and North American waters. Later joined the Russian navy and fought with distinction at the battle of Chesmé against the Turks in 1770. Afterwards commanded the Caspian flotilla and in 1801 became Governor of Cron-

we then proceeded accompanied by Mr Prynne to Mr Booker's who had sent an invitation to all the party to dine. Unfortunately the day was so wet it was utterly impossible to walk about the Town before dinner. Therefore we amus'd ourselves in the House, which is quite an English establishment on which circumstance he prides himself. We dined there, and had four officers, a french Abbé dress'd in a light silk coat, and a Physician. The officers were all English, but had been from 16 to 20 years in the Russian service. Everything was as much English as possible. Immediately after dinner we had coffee and then we were obliged to go to the Commandant about our Passports. Twenty forms and ceremonys were gone thro' ; I was ask'd among other questions what my father was and whether he was a *Member of Parliament* &c. This was translated backwards and forwards between french and Russ, and a quire of paper expended in the answers. At length we were permitted to retire, which we did to walk about the town ; it is quite a naval establishment, and magnificent as such.

[ST. PETERSBURG.] *Fri. 22*

" Here I am, seated in the Neva right opposite to the Statue of Peter the Great, just cast anchor. I have sent off a note to Doctor Rogerson ; and before I close this, you shall have a finishing line from *terra firma*. I have been diverted beyond measure at the Bridge of Boats, over which such myriads of bearded Men and Dressy Women, Coaches drawn by six and eight Horses so distant as to give the idea of many more, with a thousand new appearances to distract my wondering Eyes, are continually passing. The weather is *scorching* ; and not a woman that I have yet seen has had any sort of shade to her face. All wear turbans, flowers and long ear rings walking, and the same in Boats on the river. The Statue has not struck me as I expected, but it is very Grand, and I'll tell you more when I get nearer to it.

What signifies to tell you we ran aground three or four times last night. We really did, but this is nearly inevitable in a ship that draws even eight foot Water, so shallow is the water between

stadt. In 1808 he was appointed to the chief command of the Russian naval forces in the war against England and Sweden ; but, though he met with some success at first, he subsequently through incapacity allowed one of his ships to fall into British hands, for which he was court-martialled and dismissed the service.



ST. PETERSBURG : THE NEVA

*From a print of the drawing by Mornay in the British Museum*

On the right is a wing of the Winter Palace. The Fortress of Peter and Paul can be seen in the left background





what is call'd *the Bar* and the river, and it extends several miles. It is only sand at bottom and attended with little or no danger except it blows very hard indeed. That was not our case last night. A more lovely one cou'd not be, and in fact twilight for two or three hours was all that distinguish'd the day and night. At half past three I saw the Sun rise in splendour over the Shining Spires and Domes of this great City.

Adieu for the present.

Welcome to St Petersburg my dearest friends, for here I am in the house of Doctor Rogerson who appears a most worthy friendly man.<sup>1</sup> To-morrow I am to be presented to M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky. . . .

*Monday 25<sup>th</sup>*

" . . . On Saturday I was presented to M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky whose husband is nephew to the Princess Dashkoff.<sup>2</sup> They live in a Palace of a house with respect to Size, and if they have one livery servant they have seven and twenty besides others that flit by at every turn. At the door of each appartment sits a servant to save me the trouble of opening or shutting the door. . . .

M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky received me with excessive politeness and introduced me to *my own establishment* in this house which consists of a very elegant dressing room furnish'd with red leather sophas,

<sup>1</sup> John Samuel Rogerson (1741-1843), Scottish physician long resident in St Petersburg. Soon after leaving Edinburgh University in 1765 he came to Russia, and gave immediate proof of his medical skill by saving the life of Princess Daschkaw's son, who was suffering from croup. Shortly afterwards he was appointed Physician to the Court by Catherine II, a position which he retained with considerable distinction for nearly fifty years. He became a close friend of the Empress, who, however, preferred him as a companion rather than a doctor, saying that "to put oneself in Rogerson's hands is to be a dead man." His contemporaries asserted that he applied his science not only to bleed the Empress but to inspire her choice of favourites. This association opened to him all the doors of Russian society, where his national characteristics caused much amusement. He was fond of whist but played it very badly, and on one occasion Count Besborodko enraged him by ordering the cannons to fire whenever he revoked in the course of the game. Catherine gave him an estate in White Russia and 1600 serfs, and in the reign of Paul I he was made a Privy Councillor. In 1816 he left Russia for his native Scotland, where he spent the remainder of his life and died a centenarian.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Poliansky, daughter of M. Ivan Ribeaupierre by his wife Agrippine, daughter of General Alexander Bibikoff. Her husband, M. Alexander Poliansky, was the son of Colonel Alexander Poliansky, Court Chamberlain, who had married Countess Elizabeth Woronzow, sister of Princess Daschkaw and former mistress of the Czar Peter III.

chairs, Tables &c, a pianoforte, Harp &c, large looking Glass before which stands a pier table furnish'd with splendid Gilt China cups and saucers 'wisely kept for shew', a little clock *à la française*, besides the *Bog* or Image which I may worship if I chuse, Statues on pedestals, Vases &c. &c. The windows front the river Neva which is beautiful, always full. There is a great current but no tide to deprive it of its full compliment of Water—pleasure boats and ships enliven it during the summer. Within this Dressing room is my Sleeping room. This is paper'd with a paper to imitate a Grove of Lilac trees. When I go to bed the Window Shutter is shut, and that ceremony is merely drawing out a Slide which shades the Window and in its place brings forward a looking Glass, so that when the door is shut I am like a Bird in a Cage unable to tell which way to get out. My Bed is literally a *Sopha*; and, what surprised me a little, a single Quilt was all the covering provided, so that the Blankets I brought with me from old England stood me in good stead. Ma<sup>d</sup>m Poliansky would insist that I should feel more comfortable with her *femme de Chambre* in the room, so I yielded for once; and to give you an idea of matters, she brought two pillows which she plac'd on a second *sopha*, took off her Gown and without more ado or even attempting to cover her head which was bare, she stretch'd on the *sopha*, and, at my request fell into a profound slumber. I then plac'd my Riding Habit &c on my *Sopha*, and with a little more of Ceremony than my fair attendant fell into as equally profound a slumber. . . . Soundly I must have slept, for the first news of the Morning was that so violent a clap of thunder and such vivid lightening had fallen in the night as to have knock'd Down a Church!

But I should give you the history of Saturday. M<sup>d</sup>m Poliansky resembles Bess Erskine a little, but is not so pretty. Our conversation was entirely french which I succeeded in most wonderfully I can assure you. I accompanied her thro' a suite of wild, waste, stately appartments, I dare say ten, and at length reach'd her dressing room &c which resembles my own. We chop'd up Love, taste, sentiment, and the musical Glasses, and *entre nous*, these words describe her stile of Character. At three o'clock she presented me to Mons. Poliansky her husband, and at dinner time we were join'd by his father. The old gentleman does not speak

french, so his conversation with me was very droll. I pick'd up one or two words and the rest was signs and translations by M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky. They guess'd my age to be *eighteen*, and told me I was very pretty. So they conclude, I understand, that either I have been *cross'd in Love*, or my Parents wish me to marry some person I do not like, so sent me on this Voyage to *dissipate* my *Chagrin*. I have, in reply, told the history of my dear parents, and their indulgence to my wishes, and M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky has given me the history of hers.

In the Evening we went to the Academy over which the princess Dashkoff presided ; there I saw the famous figure of Peter the Great, his cloaths, his works in Ivory and Brass, and the Horse he rode with the five Dogs that accompanied him, all stuff'd and perfect. \*The other curiosities are like those of all other Museums.<sup>1</sup> We then proceeded to M<sup>dm</sup> Ribaupier's, mother to M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky, where we pass'd a pleasant Evening.<sup>2</sup> One of her Daughters a Girl of fiveteen speaks *five* languages fluently. Her mother reminded me of mine, in her anxiety to make the girl speak English to me to catch the *foreign accent* from me.

*Sunday morning.* [24<sup>th</sup>]

Coffee was brought to my dressing room. About twelve M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky conducted me to hers, and at two I went to dine at Doctor Rogerson's where I met a M<sup>r</sup> Pitt and his family, the English Clergyman, and some other English people. At six I return'd, and pass'd the evening with M. & M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky.

To-day Monday we are to dine at M<sup>dm</sup> Dadouaroff's, one of the ladies to whom Bess Erskine gave me letters. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Among the exhibits which Princess Daschkaw caused to be removed when she became Director of the Academy were two human heads preserved in spirits. These were the remains of Mrs. Hamilton, an unfaithful mistress of the Czar Peter the Great, and William Mons, the supposed lover of Peter's wife, the Empress Catherine I, both of whom had been executed by the Czar's orders.

<sup>2</sup> Mme Agrippine Ribeaupierre (1755-1812), daughter of Catherine II's great general Alexander Bibikoff. Her father was killed during the rebellion of the pretender Pugacheff in 1774. Her husband, M. Ivan Ribeaupierre, a member of an old Alsatian family (his father, Marc-Stéphane Ribeaupierre, was the friend of Voltaire), perished in the Turkish Wars. During the reign of Paul I she had been in disgrace by reason of a duel which their only son Alexander had fought with Prince Sviatopolk-Chetvertinsky.

*Tuesday Morning [26<sup>th</sup>]*

"I spent a delightful day with M<sup>dm</sup> Dadouaroff who is a beautiful and very elegant Woman.<sup>1</sup> She invited me in the most engaging Manner to accompany her to the french theatre which I did and was highly amused. I understood between Acting and french the entire plot, and once heard myself laughing as usual at something ridiculous. . . .

The time of my going to Moscow is not yet fixed, but will probably be in a Week.

Adieu my ever dear father & mother

May Heaven bless you one and all

MARTHA WILMOT.

*To HER MOTHER*

ST PETERSBURGH, 31<sup>st</sup> *July* New Style 1803

" . . . I was last night [29<sup>th</sup>] at a Custom House auction ; and there I saw odds and ends from the 99 quarters of the world, specimens of every Nation under the Sun. But that's a trifle compar'd to the different Ages of the World, at least the world of fashion in Dress which are suddenly collected before your Eyes. I have heard people of curiosity regret that during a long life they had not collected specimens of the fashion of every year by dressing a Doll as every flash of fashion flitted by—t'is a pity such are not here ; for I give you my word Lady Betty Bunberry's flounces, furbelows and everything but her Hoop are hourly contrasted with Mademoiselle the Grand child's airy and capricious attire with all gradations included. Then for language, t'is a Tower of Babel as you may suppose, and it seems as if Russians had the tallent born with them of speaking all fluently, for t'is quite common to hear four or five at one dinner Table. French is universal, I get on at it tolerably, but hearing it as the general language is so different from being address'd by an individual that I find often great deficiency ; but what Vexes me is that the Jades

<sup>1</sup> Mme Anne Ivanovna Adadouroff (1777-1854), *née* Koudereff. Her husband, Alexis Petrovich Adadouroff, was Equerry to the Czar Alexander I. His uncle, Basil Adadouroff, had been Curator of Moscow University and tutor to the Empress Catherine II.

want to practise English on *me* as I used to do french on Pont de L'abbé our black eyed supper friend.

Yesterday Evening we went to see an *air balloon*. I delight in sights, not for their own sakes but because they collect a Mob, and that exhibits so much of national character. We had two Mobs yesterday, a genteel and a vulgar one. The first was in the Gardens belonging to the Academy of the Cadet Corps. The dear children from 6 or 7 to 16 or sometimes 18 years old were drawn out in their Green and Scarlet uniform. The Emperor and Empress then arrived.<sup>1</sup> He is a tall fair handsomish looking Young Man—she tall, fair, and would be very pretty, only for a dreadful scurvy she has in her face ; her dress was a lilac round Gown of slight Silk always flowing on the ground which is *quite Russian*, a Shawl and a lace Veil thrown over her head which was all the covering it had and is the usual head dress of the higher orders while they wear Shawls and long Cloaks like Celia's rug only of silk wadded covering their shoulders and down to their heels. Sir John Warren, our Ambassador, was amongst the Courtiers. So striking a resemblance of him as the Print in our music room I have seldom seen—sweet Good Man he looks So benevolent ! I'll tell you by and by of his visit to me. But here goes the

<sup>1</sup> Alexander I (1777-1825) and Elizabeth Alexeevna (1779-1826). Alexander was son of Czar Paul I and grandson of the Empress Catherine II. The assassination of his father in 1801 had placed him unexpectedly on the Russian throne, where he was now putting into operation the liberal principles which he had learned in the free thinking atmosphere of his grandmother's Court. He was at this time young and well-meaning and exceedingly popular, but unfortunately his country was not ready for the reforms which he contemplated and so the bulk of his legislative programme had ultimately to be abandoned. In the region of foreign affairs his grandiose scheme of a Holy Alliance to confederate the principal European Powers and his proposals for a general disarmament met with a similar fate. During the closing years of his reign his policy was frankly reactionary both at home and abroad. In view, therefore, of the brilliant promise of his early years, and the actual policy which succeeding events forced upon him, he stands out as one of the most tragic figures in the history of modern Europe.

Alexander I married in 1793 the beautiful and clever Marie Louise of Baden, who as Empress took the names of Elizabeth Alexeevna. The union, being a political match, proved unhappy and Alexander found consolation in the charms of the celebrated Mme. Marie Narishkin, who bore him several children. Strangely enough his ultimate reconciliation with the Empress was effected towards the close of his reign by the wise sympathy which she displayed on the death of his daughter Sophie by Mme. Narishkin.

Baloon ! and in it M<sup>r</sup> Garnerine and a wise Russian Gen<sup>l</sup> of 60, gen<sup>l</sup> Levofá by name who took the prettiest flight into the air I ever beheld amidst the plaudits of us gaping gazing earth worms ; realy and truly it was very noble and beautiful, and what's more the first I ever saw in my life. After a flight of a few Versts they perch'd safely in a field. In the crowd were two Armenian Men, so handsome, the dress so peculiar and beautiful, and the air so singular, that I wou'd give any thing I cou'd draw to take and preserve for your amusement Sketches of the most remarkable people I meet with.

As for Places, I don't so much care. I have seen the Palace and t'is Magnificent boundless and comfortless.<sup>1</sup> The famous Hermitage possesses a rural Name and is a second edition or nearly of the Palace ; the Garden indeed in which trees of good size *actually* grow, tho' all the earth has been rais'd artificially, and there are Houses underneath, is interesting.<sup>2</sup> But the people, the never ending variety of people, is what I shou'd like to shew you. Coming from this Show we were hustled into the Vulgar Mob and as luck wou'd have it their Imperial Majestys pass'd as close to us as this letter will be to you while you read it, so I had a compleat view of them. They saluted every one most graciously as they walk'd slowly to their Coach which is not distinguish'd from any other equipage.

It was on thursday Sir John Warren call'd on me.<sup>3</sup> Lady Warren being in England, and the letters of introduction I had being particularly kind, he wav'd Etiquette and came attended

<sup>1</sup> The Winter Palace, now the Palace of Art in Leningrad, was constructed by the Italian architect Rastrelli in the reign of the Empress Elizabeth (c. 1760).

<sup>2</sup> The Hermitage, which adjoined the Winter Palace, was founded by Catherine II in 1765 as an artistic salon for her intimate circle. Its collections were increased and generally made accessible to the public by the Czar Nicholas I (1825-1855). It is now one of the most important museums in the world.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Borlase Warren (1753-1822), Bart., English admiral and diplomat. British Ambassador in St Petersburg from 1802 to 1806. Served also with distinction in various naval commands throughout the Napoleonic Wars, though, in spite of numerous successful engagements with the enemy, his knowledge of practical seamanship appears to have been extremely limited. He married Caroline, daughter of General Sir John Clavering. His eldest daughter Frances married George, 4th Baron Vernon and became the mother of Lord Vernon, the great Italian scholar and authority on Dante.

by my fellow passenger his Secretary. He came into my little dressing room which I have already describ'd with so kind so fatherly and friendly an air as instantly to banish all restraint, but I must say Mr Wilmot's letter was, I am sure, the principal cause of his attention. . . . Sir John Warren took an opportunity of telling M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky that he was particularly interested on my account to secure her best attentions &c. &c. &c.

To-day I went to the English Church which is near this attended by a footman in high heel'd Boots. After Church the Ambassador kindly made enquirys how I felt now I was a week on Shore, and with regard to my journey to Moscow, expressing again his regrets that Lady Warren was not at St Petersburg. My journey, in fact, is to take place in a Week with a Doc<sup>r</sup> and M<sup>rs</sup> Holiday, English people, but first I am to go to a *transcendent* fête at the Palacé at Peteroff. I have had several visitors and invitations in consequence of my letters and offers of service from all. I dined once at my Bankers Mr Raikes ; his wife is in the country as are most people at present, but a Miss Raikes was at home. I do not like the practise they have here of dining at three o'clock and separating *before tea*, so that by half after five or six, unless you are engag'd to some party, you return home gaping for your amusement your Scandal and your tea—but the practise is universal. . . .

*Mon. Even<sup>g</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> August*

"I am just return'd from Walking to examine the celebrated Statue of Peter the Great.<sup>1</sup> It is undoubtedly noble beyond what one could almost suppose possible in imitative art, for the Horse actually cheats you after some time into a belief that the swelling veins, the strong sinews, and ardent impatient air with which he

<sup>1</sup> This colossal equestrian statue in bronze standing on the right bank of the Neva was executed by the French sculptor Falconet at the order of the Empress Catherine II. The granite rock which serves as its pedestal was discovered in a swamp in the district of Carelia in Finland, and its transport to the capital by hundreds of forced labourers was considered a great feat of engineering at the time. It bears the following brief inscription in Latin and Russian: "To Peter the Great from Catherine the Second, 1782." Small fragments of the rock were used for making earrings. Catherine II had a pair made for herself and another which she sent to Queen Charlotte, wife of George III of England. A larger piece, which was shaped into a model of the pedestal, was given by Princess Daschkaw to Martha Wilmot in 1806. This is now in the possession of Martha Wilmot's great-grandniece, Mrs Evelyn Marindin.



grandly endeavours to bound over all difficulties, and the ease dignity and commanding air of the Hero who holds the reins in one hand while he seems to command worlds by the expression of the other, could only be convey'd by *life itself*. It really is the finest Statue I ever beheld—but with grief I add, the beautiful allegory is nearly lost by the barbarous use which has been made of the Chisel reducing the rock on which it stands till 'tis almost too small for proportion, and plaining its ruggedness which was one of its best qualities. However it is a glorious Monument and the Russians value it as such.

We have a very pleasant trip in agitation to-morrow Evening. We are to go to Peteroff and stay till after Wednesday's fête, then proceed to Oranienbaum which is a Lion, and after that spend a day at one of M. Poliansky's *Genies*. On Monday next I fancy I am to set out for Moscow. I have written to Kitty to Geneva. A brother of M<sup>dm</sup> P's Mr Ribaupier has undertaken to have it forwarded safely to her by an uncle he has settled there.

. . . Tell Anna<sup>1</sup> I have to boast that I have seen my own face in the same looking Glass by which her favorite Hero Charles the 12<sup>th</sup> of Sweden used to Shave. Peter the Great took it and a few other trifles as spoils on some occasion when the Enemy was oblig'd to fly before him, and they are now preserved as sacred relics in the Academy of Arts and Sciences.

I have nearly exhausted my Gossip unless I was to write about the difference of Cooking, Morals, cleanliness &c. &c. With regard to the first, two Soups are always brought to Table and distributed by a servant, one compos'd of Herbs, I believe some odious essence of Rosemary or some such thing, ornamented and enrich'd by lumps of fat—the other is neither more nor less than offer'd *petit patées* of bad paste and much worse chop'd Veal, hard Eggs and Herbs. If you don't chuse any, you may let it alone and sit looking at those that do till they have done. You are then presented with a Fowl smother'd in butter and boil'd to rags, and the same ceremony goes forward. Next is offer'd vegetables of various kinds and so disguis'd that it requires some Wit to find them out. Next roast Meat, then Wild Boar Ham, and in short

<sup>1</sup> Anna, daughter of the Rev. John Chetwood of Glanmire, County Cork. Her sister Elizabeth was married to Martha Wilmot's brother Robert, Deputy Recorder of Cork.



THE STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT BY FALCONET IN ST. PETERSBURG

*From a print of the drawing by Mornay in the British Museum*

The building on the left is the Senate House. To the right of the statue on the opposite bank of the Neva is the Academy of Arts and Sciences



such a train of dishes after the same fashion as keeps one hours at table. At length comes the dessert, and tho' the fruits are handed about and you must eat according to the servants' taste not your own, yet all their fruit being good this does not signify. The Water Melon is a very fine fruit and grateful in warm Weather as it [is] Cold as Ice and so juicy that 'tis like a pleasant draught of some agreeable liquid. Coffee follows dinner without removing the cloath or drinking 4 Glasses of Wine, Men and Women rising at the same moment from Table. We then converse for half an hour and go out to Visit in our Coach and four.

One Evening that we spent at M<sup>dm</sup> Ribaupier's, I prevail'd on one of the Mad<sup>les</sup> R——s to dance the national dance for me ! It is very peculiar, and I mean to learn it to amuse you all. They then made me dance which I did solo about the room. When I had done they flew six at a time Princess Turkistanoff<sup>1</sup> amongst the number, kiss'd me and call'd me a thousand fond and tender names. The examination of my Wardrobe wou'd have made you laugh, and the admiration for everything English. I mention these trifles because I think they are very characteristic—at least they strike me so at the moment of experiencing them. They tell me their Secrets without asking and then enquire after *my Lovers*, family, friends &c. &c. with the most insufferable familiarity.

The river Neva is at this moment one of the most beautiful objects I ever beheld, ever full clear and generally smooth—but now, as I look out of the window, it is enliven'd by the gayest pretty little ten or twelve oar'd boats half of which is cover'd with a canopy fring'd with Gold for the company, the rowers moving in perfect unison pausing gracefully after every stroke on the Water and often singing with a Melody that, 'tis say'd, no other nation can equal.

<sup>1</sup> Princess Varvara (Barbe) Turkestanoff (1778 ?-1819), Maid of Honour to the Dowager Empress Marie Feodorovna. Was a member of an old Georgian family and from her correspondence appears to have been a very charming and cultured woman. It is said that her conversation was particularly appreciated by the Czar Alexander I. Unfortunately she was seduced by Prince Vladimir Galitzen, a member of a noble house well known for his gallantries, and is commonly supposed to have taken a fatal dose of poison in a fit of remorse following the birth of a daughter. A considerable number of her letters written in French from 1813 to her death, together with an interesting sketch of her life by Baron Budberg, have been published in the *Rusky Archiv* (Moscow, 1882-84).

## TO HER SISTER HARRIET

GALIOBITZE. *Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> August.* New Style

"I clos'd a Letter to my Mother on Tuesday last just as we were setting out to Peteroff to the great Feast. We are to return to Petersburg to-morrow and as good luck has thrown a miserably bad Pen and Ink in my way, I gladly seize the power it gives me of amusing my ever dearest Harriet with a few of my adventures.

Suppose us then, that is Mr & M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky, young Mr Ribaupier (a very pretty young Man let me tell you)<sup>1</sup> and myself seated in a very handsome open Coach and eight, four Horses abreast and then two and two setting off like mad to be ready for the grand fête. Just as I was locking up my small appartement for *reasons best known to myself*, the *femme de Chambre* came in and dismantled my Pavillion of *all* its furniture. In pity's name what is she doing, says I to M<sup>dm</sup> P. Only taking your Bed for you to sleep on, was her reply with a look of surprise at my question. Humph! thinks I. One must live and learn. Well off we set, and on the road met such a Multitude of Coaches, Chaises, Drushkas, carts, Waggon, in short so many and so various were the stile of the equipages that I defy the most creative fancy to equal either the number or the variety. When we had gone about ten Versts, each Verst three quarters of a mile, we saw a church. Before we came up to it, I observ'd that every Carriage as it pass'd slacken'd its pace and every servant pulling of his Hat began to cross himself with all his might producing the drollest effect you can imagine. When we arrived, M<sup>dm</sup> P. being particularly devout stop'd, and we all descended. I accompanied them into the Church where after several crossings and bowings to several Images they at length kiss'd one. Our Seven Servants cross'd themselves outside the Porch. Mons<sup>r</sup> Ribaupier told me that it was the custom whenever a Russ man or woman look'd at a Church to Cross themselves, but slyly remark'd 'it was not necessary to look at every one'.

After this ceremony we proceeded, and continuing to drive

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Ribaupierre (1781-1865), later Count. Only son of M. Ivan Ribaupierre and Agrippine, daughter of General Alexander Bibikoff. During the reign of Paul I he had been imprisoned in a fortress for having fought a duel with Prince Boris Sviatopolk-Tchetvertinsky.

thro' a very pretty cultivated Country quite in the English taste, we at length arrived at the Village of Peteroff. The village is pretty, but the Palace and Gardens are the grand objects.<sup>1</sup> We went into the latter immediately, and I was indeed enchanted with them. Description conveys at best but very imperfect ideas of places and I am a bad describer. But suppose a judicious arrangement of Wood, Lawn, Walks, long Alleys, Magnificent rusticity &c. &c. &c. and then open your minds eye to such a display of Water, Works as indeed I could not have suppos'd it possible for art to produce—Fountain, *Jet d'eau*s, Trees, Pillars, Gladiators with swords of Water! Oh dear! I cou'd not name half the Objects nor half the capricious yet imposing striking fancy that inspir'd the projector in collecting such an assemblage, but the *tout en semble* delighted me.

You must now walk with me leaning on young M<sup>r</sup> R. who was stunning me with roaring for my amusement the Russian Peasant Song not very unlike our Irish *Whilleboloo* till we arrived at the Wooden House, half a mile from Peteroff belonging to a great uncle of Mad<sup>m</sup> Polianskys, a Grandee, his name Levachoff, great Master of the Chase to the Emperor. His *high mightiness* came into the Yard to receive us in his sattin *robe de chambre*, pantoufles &c. &c. However, as he had before our arrival shared his House with fourteen friends, we could only be accomodated with one room and a dressing room. Presently a Coach arrived containing M<sup>dm</sup> Ribaupier, her two Daughters, Princess Turkistanoff, and a Married Lady who *never* speaks and whose name, quality, Husband or residence I am at this moment as ignorant of as I was on the first day I beheld her which was at M<sup>dm</sup> Ribaupier's the day of my arrival. So if you please we will call her *Nobody*—the only objection I can find to that name is that she not only eats drinks and moves wherever the family go, but she appears likely to add a *Young Nobody* to the society e'er long. What were we to do for accomodation? One very small room and a still smaller dressing room which it was immediately resolv'd should be devoted to Nobody and the Maids! Guess Harriet three times,

<sup>1</sup> The Palace of Peterhof was built for the Czar Peter the Great, according to the plans of Leblanc, in 1715. It was considerably extended by Rastrelli in 1750 and was long used by the imperial family as a summer residence.

and then read. We fairly and squarely laid a tremendous Matrass and two feather Beds flat upon the floor ; on it stretch'd M<sup>dm</sup> P., her two sisters, the great Princess Turkistanoff and your sister. M<sup>dm</sup> Ribaupier was complimented with a small Sopha and the entire room was not so large nor half so high as our breakfast parlor. By the bie, it was just the shape of the outside passage to my father's study.

After slumbering a most musical quintette we rose with one accord, dress'd, snatch'd a cup of Coffee and got into M<sup>dm</sup> R——'s Carriage which resembles a jaunting Car with a canopy large enough to hold ten people with ease. In this we drove to the Gardens and walk'd to the Palace. There we saw the Emperor, Empress, and the entire Court repair to Chapel in full Gold and Silver dresses embroider'd with diamonds and diamond sword knots as common as ribband and as large. ' Pardon me, Madam ' says a grandee to a Lady whose Gown he had just torn, ' I beg a thousand pardons.' The poor Lady did not look pleased, which I thought very unreasonable considering the offending Weapon was adorn'd with a knott of Diamonds. . . . Here it is the custom not to wear Hoops on days of this kind, but it is in winter, and the effect is merely that of a well dress'd Ball room.

After we had seen the Court pass by, we proceeded to walk thro' the Gardens, and lovely they are—so extensive and so beautiful and the Water works are beyond description. One object which interested me more than the rest was a dear little dwelling of Peter the Great in a retir'd part of the Garden and looking on the sea. It consists of but few rooms, and inside his Bed Chamber is a little Kitchen where, t'is say'd, he used often to amuse himself by *dressing his own dinner*. As the Day was in honor of the Empress's Mother's Saint (S<sup>t</sup> Mary) they contrived it so that the letter M shou'd strike the eye in different points of view.<sup>1</sup> Here it was particularly striking, for they manag'd it that five Yachts which lay in the roads shou'd be highly ornamented

<sup>1</sup> Maria Feodorovna (1759-1828), Dowager Empress of Russia, *née* Princess Sophia Dorothea of Württemberg. She married in 1776 as his second wife the Grand Duke Paul, later Czar Paul I, over whom she succeeded in exercising a considerable influence for the good in spite of his abnormality. She was particularly interested in popular education and other works of social welfare, and after Paul's assassination in 1801 she devoted her life exclusively to these objects. She founded a large

and at night illuminated, the centre one forming the letter M—but this is before its time. We ought to walk about in different directions for two or three hours, meeting such a multitude of well dress'd people (tho' not noblesse, for you must know on a day of this kind the gardens are thrown open for all sorts and kinds of people). There I saw for the first time a proper Merchant's wife. If I describe her dress, you will I fear scarcely believe me that in one of the warmest days that ever came, she was array'd in a Jacket and petticoat of Damask brocaded richly with Gold, stomacher distinct and chiefly compos'd of pearls, a plaited border of pearls as if it was of muslin form'd the front of her cap, while a building scarcely half a yard high compos'd of pearls and diamonds compleated the head dress. On her neck were twenty rows of Pearl, and on her Massy arms hung twelve rows (for I reckon'd them) by the way of bracelets. Thus array'd she walk'd by the side of her bearded Husband, whose dress was likewise the native dress of the country, a Coat of green Velvet with a sort of petticoat Skirt reaching to his heels and embroider'd all round with gold, flat crown'd hat which never quitted his head &c. &c. I cannot express to you what pleasure this pair gave me. I am told that in no other part of the world is such a sight to be seen.

After walking for a good while we again return'd to our Wooden House which we now found empty as all the world were gone to the fête. The uncle had exchang'd his *robe de chambre* for splendid embroidery, Stars and garters &c. &c. and as both M. Poliansky and M. Ribaupier are Chamberlains to his Imperial Majesty, they dined at court richly dress'd with golden Keys at their sword Knots, badges of their employment. We dined, and then Harriet ! oh for the pen of puzzlementation to describe our dressing Scene which soon follow'd—men-servants, maid servants, Pomatum, powder, rouge, tea, Coffee, diamonds, pearls, snuff boxes, all hickledy pickledy in the self same little dressing room. Fancy it all I beseech you ; and then suppose us like so many butterflys emerging from their Grubs, issuing forth in

number of schools for girls and was for many years patron of the famous Smolny Institute in St Petersburg. She was also a cameo artist and medallist of considerable merit. She was the mother of two Czars, Alexander I and Nicholas I.



robes of silver tissue and Diamond Bandeaux—three apiece on two of the heads, long diamond earrings and every finery that money could purchase.

We arrived at the Palace at seven o'clock, the rooms of which were all thrown open, and we there met such a crowd of people that we cou'd scarcely advance. At length the Emperor and Empress &c. &c. appeared and a Polish Dance was begun, the Emperor leading out my beautiful acquaintance M<sup>dm</sup> Adadoroff and (follow'd by, I dare say, sixty couple) literally walk'd the figure of 8 to music. It was simply a Promenade by which I saw again and again every Grandee who pass'd successively as close to me as they cou'd well do. The Empress look'd charming, and the affable manners which she and all the Imperial family possess are quite delightful. The Empress Mother mov'd thro' the circle and threw us all into extasys by her amiable conduct. I do assure you she bow'd most graciously to me. The two grand Dutchesses, young girls and sisters of the Emperor are very pretty. One of them had a Curricule dress on which was trim'd all round with diamonds—four rows making a Band as broad as a sixpenny ribband, their heads &c adorn'd in proportion. Judge how abundant precious stones must be here, nearly a drug, for they are often more like a jeweller's shop than any adornments selected by good taste. From this you may suppose them cheap. Not at all. I too thought so, and on a slight speculation had some notion of purchasing them to make my Fortune hereafter—but it wou'd not do. My Castle of air vanish'd, for diamonds here bear a value fully equal to what they do in England ; and yet the profusion of them is scarcely to be conceiv'd. So leaving them with those who have them we will proceed to the Gardens which by this time began to be illuminated ; along every walk were festoons of little sparkling Lamps and the water works now were a perfect blaze of beauty and threw out a diamond spray that sparkled in every direction. The Palaces were illuminated, and in short the entire scene was absolutely like enchantment. We drove about in an open Carriage, the night was lovely, and you may judge how warm when I tell you we did not attempt to cover our heads all the time we were driving about.

In the course of the Evening I saw all my acquaintances of this new World. My excellent and truly good natur'd M<sup>r</sup> Prynne

staid with me till scandal began to blink ; the family of Raikes found me out *small as I am*, as did Mr York, Bond, Garlick and that pride of Britain's, Sir John Warren, on whose amiable honest face I always dwell with delight whenever I discover it in a circle of those *Strangers to me*. Mr Garlick is next in rank to him, and a very gentleman like man, he has call'd on me also, but I have to lament that as they are, one and all, single men, I can only receive their visits but cannot go to their Houses. *This* however throws me entirely into the Society of the Natives which gives me an opportunity of judging of their manners, and when one goes abroad t's best to see the humour of the place one visits. Perhaps this wise remark is only sour Grapes, and indeed I believe it is, for why shou'd I deny that it wou'd give me pleasure to cultivate some of the English I meet with in any place or under any circumstances.

But it is time now to return home to our small apartment in the wooden House, to eat a very hearty Supper and at half past two in the morning repose our five weary Carcasses on the *Bed of Ware* till the brilliant sun of the following morning tempted us once more to take shelter in the lovely shades of Peteroff, cool'd by the Cascades and offering every temptation to beguile our time agreeably till dinner hour arriv'd. You must know my favorite amongst the party is Princess Turkistanoff. Her high sounding title does not prevent her seeking me out and appearing to enjoy my society ; and this I must tell you is not to be expected from every one, *Russian* good breeding and *French* being as distinct as daylight and night. They often hustle together and whisper, or talk Russ, which is just as impolite where they *naturally* talk french that a poor little Stranger might understand. The truth is refinement is coming on, but has not yet taken up its abode amongst them. The Men and Women divide into separate society. At least it has struck me this is the case in the three or four dinner partys I have been at, tho' they rise from Table at the same moment.

M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky is a pretty woman, and very pleasing. Her second Sister I cannot endure. Her name is Anastasia and they call her *Nasty* for shortness without knowing that it serves to define her character a little too severely perhaps, but yet admirably well—she is truly Russian. The third is very young and her turn

of mind superior to any of the older ones of the family, simple, unaffected and fond of cultivating her mind, singing secretly with the most plaintive naturally sentimental voice I ever heard (there is a character in the Russians' manner of singing, peculiar to themselves and very pleasing). Her name is Katherine. Of the brother I can only say he is very handsome and very gentlemanlike, speaks three or four languages, is a perfect musician and a very agreeable companion. The mother has been a beauty, married for love a Swiss officer who is dead. She is what is call'd agreeable, but does not happen to hit my fancy, Lolls upon a Sopha for ever with her shoes down at heel and her Gown scarcely tied on. Every creature wears a Shawl ; and I suppose the word *Slamikin* cou'd no where else be half so well apply'd as to every description of well bred Russian. Not so the Peasants.

I must now make you take out your lily white pocket handkerchief, and bid adieu to the family of Ribaupier and the Princess Turkistanoff who has christen'd me *la chère petite mees* (miss) each kissing your two cheeks not because they love you but because 'tis the Fashion, and step into the Poliansky Coach follow'd by the three Horse Waggon containing every implement of Household furniture, Kitchen Utensils food &c. &c. on the top of which rides in state the *femme de chambre* and one or two men with the Cook travelling above 30 Versts till you reach the place from whence this letter is dated. Arrived at the door of an old tatter'd Wooden House, push it open and walk into the Hall stopping your nose if you chuse, then open the windows to let in a little fresh air. After a few minutes the servants will produce Wax candles in silver Candlesticks, Tea in China cups and saucers, made in silver tea pot and handed in on silver Waiter—then fling down your Bed on the floor, and wishing you a good night (*prascharge*) leave you to your own inventions, as I do now, for indeed, Harriet my child, I am half dead with sleep, so good night, and God bless you.

*Tuesday morning*

[9<sup>th</sup> August, ST PETERSBURGH]

“ . . . I have allow'd you to sleep too long. You ought to be up with the Lark, walking thro' the pretty woods &c. &c. and then driving about on a little Droschka all round the country thro'

Woods inhabited during the Winter by Wolves, Bears &c. &c. That Evening we spent at a Countess de *the Duce knows what*—her daughter sings sweetly ; we sup'd on soup and seven meats one after the other, ending all with sour milk and some powder that look'd like *Jallup*, the family compos'd of, I dare say, sixteen individuals and not three of the same name.

Saturday we pass'd nearly in the same manner, and on Sunday we return'd to St Petersburg. Our first stop was to dine at another Cottage belonging to M. Poliansky about 20 Versts from Galiobitze. There we struck our tents like wandering tartar tribes and in an hour had a splendid repast, and even hot bread. So versatile and independent is the genius of a Russian Peasant I have never before met with. One Man is a little Colony in himself, a brewer of *Quass*,<sup>1</sup> and maker and baker of bread, a Taylor, a carpenter, a Builder, a cobbler, a Knitter, a Cook, a Gardener—everything in short except a Barber and that trade he does not understand for no Jew that ever turn'd a hundred pounds into a thousand offended my eyes with such a beard as all these Peasants wear. During the desert several of the Cottagers arrived with offerings of Eggs &c. What I wou'd give I was able to draw if it was only to send you the Dress of a Russ Woman. Oh Dorothea<sup>2</sup> why cannot you come at my bidding with your pencil in your hand to exhibit the fanciful Indian looking blue robe border'd with embroidery all round and button'd down the front, the large white Sleeves and the bracelets of colour'd beads, the necklaces and on some the Turban, on others the Gold embroidered head dress form'd like a Crown clos'd on the top with the hair plaited or gaily tied with knots of ribband and hanging down the Back on the young girls of the Village. I protest it is the prettiest, odd, savage, fanciful thing I ever beheld. I was standing at the Cottage door after dinner admiring a troop who were advancing with Baskets of Eggs cover'd with different colour'd handkerchiefs border'd with work or lace, when one of them suddenly seized my hand, and before I had time (by signs) to

<sup>1</sup> Kvass, a common beverage of the Russians, usually fermented from a mixture of rye-flour or bread with malt. The English explorer Chancellor, who visited Muscovy in the sixteenth century, wrote that "their drinke is like our peny Ale and is called Quass".

<sup>2</sup> Martha Wilmot's sister Dorothea. She married Roger Eaton of Parglas, Wales.

assure her I was not M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky, kiss'd it, then each of my cheeks. By the time my repeated vociferation of the word *Niet* (No) and pointing to M<sup>dm</sup> P. convin'd the poor soul of her mistake she immediately repeated the ceremony to her, adding a *plump on the ground* to embrace her feet, all the others following her example—the same to M<sup>r</sup> P. Both however were distress'd by this last practise I must say for their credit. Money was distributed for the Peasants, and we again proceeded on our journey.

If I tell you that the general face of the country is flat with a great deal of Wood, 'tis all I can say. We saw sometimes fields of very fine grains of different kinds, and once a field of English oats belonging to M<sup>r</sup> Poliansky, but little or no Water or anything to diversify the scenery. At the next place we stop'd there was a church. There we went, and M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky *purchas'd* a *te deum* and prayers for our safe journey. We then went into a sort of Inn where we drank our own Coffee, tea &c. and hearing some very loud singing in an opposite House we repair'd to it and came in for a Wedding. The ceremony was unfortunately over, but we saw the Bride and Bridegroom who were of the lowest order, tho' I do assure you they were both dress'd in sattin robes embroider'd with Gold; and on her head a sort of machine like the top knot of a Fowl or rather a large fan of Gold spread out, her head encircled with a band of gold lace.

Oh I am tired of describing. And this journey to Moscow—it gives me a world of business. A Carriage is to be bought for me, servants hired, my Clothes, lord help me, *all to be pack'd up* and dear friends such as I had in John Street to do everything for me that affection cou'd dictate. There is one comfort however I shall not feel half the twentieth part of the regrets which weigh'd so heavily on my heart that day.

Adieu my darling Harriet.

#### TO HER FATHER

LAMICHENOFF, 19<sup>th</sup> August [1803] New Style

“ On the road to Moscow above 600 Versts <sup>1</sup> from S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg, I cannot resist scribbling a few lines to my precious Home. Before this letter is finish'd I shall have travell'd above 700, and

<sup>1</sup> 1 verst = 1.06 kilometres or  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a mile.

before you receive it almost 800 as Princess Dashkoff is at Troitska 80 Versts beyond Moscow.<sup>1</sup>

I was very sorry to quit St Petersburg where I spent three weeks most agreeably and where I hope to spend some more time, for indeed I have met with a degree of kindness from several of its inhabitants that is quite delightful to me and makes me enjoy the idea of repeating my visit to M<sup>dm</sup> Poliansky which she insists on more than I can tell you. I quitted the beautiful Banks of the Neva at ten o'clock last friday evening the 12<sup>th</sup> Ins<sup>t</sup>. We travell'd *all night* by way of getting accustom'd to the roads—Dr Halliday and I in one chaise, and M<sup>rs</sup> H. her maid and child in another. The next Morning we stop'd to drink Coffee for about an hour. I then proceeded with M<sup>rs</sup> H. till dinner time. For dinner we unpack'd our own stores, such is the fashion here, and using even our own knives and forks, we were only indebted to the people of the Wooden Hut where we stopt for some Water to our Wine. Again we proceeded, and I swear no Gold headed Cane that your Honor ever walk'd with laid flat on the ground was ever straighter or more uniform than the first 100 versts from St Petersburg on the Moscow road. The road is generally planks of wood, and at each side the Forests are boundless and very monotonous. Again we slumber'd in our Carriages.

The first object that interested me was Novogorod, about 160 Versts from St Petersburg. Doc<sup>r</sup> H. gave me its history which I had not heard before. It seems it was once an Independent Republic existing of itself and for itself, exporting its own produce to other countrys and quite civilized. Its fame and happiness at length excited the jealousy of a Russian Tyrant Ivan Vassilovitch who attack'd it and by unexampled acts of cruelty absolutely exterminated the race, and added the tract of country to his own Dominions leaving scarcely a wreck even of the Town except the Monastery.<sup>2</sup> This we visited and its splendor is very striking.

<sup>1</sup> The estate and village of Troitskoe are situated about 60 miles south of Moscow, on the road between Serpukhov and Borovsk. Princess Daschkaw is buried in the village church.

<sup>2</sup> Ivan IV (1530-1584) Czar of Muscovy, known as "the Terrible." Was the first Russian ruler to use the title of Czar. By showing a sublime contempt of human life he broke the power of the old native nobility ("boyars"), at whose expense he elevated the merchant classes. He conquered Khazan, Astrakhan, and Siberia, and made an inroad into the

As it was Sunday the congregation &c appear'd to advantage—thousands and thousands of pounds sterling wou'd not purchase the pearls and diamonds of the Women's dresses, while the priests wore caps of Gold embroider'd with pearls and pray'd to images of (I believe) massy Gold. . . . 'Tis say'd that execrable Ivan was contemporary with our Queen Elizabeth and propos'd for her ; she accepted of him, and putting royal robes on one of her maids of Honor sent her to be made Czarina of Moscovy which she actually was, they say.<sup>1</sup> The singing at Novogorod was the most enchanting Music I ever heard ; but the Russians are all musicians ; even the common Postillions sing first and second, as they drive along by day and night, with wonderful sweetness.

From Novogorod the next most striking object was Tware situated on the river Wolga. There I got out of the Carriage to taste the waters and wash my hands in them—but my having tasted the waters and wash'd my hands is not the only thing Tware has to boast of ; it is a new town and the capital of a district. As usual we went into the Church, which is inferiour to Novogorod, so we will not mind it. The Dress of its inhabitants is peculiar to itself, and forms a contrast to that of the surrounding districts. After quitting Tware we again proceeded ; and in the course of that day's Journey cross'd a river in a new and most comfortable Style. Arrived at the edge of it, we look'd about for a bridge, but all in vain. In this disconsolate state we invoked all the

Crimea. At first he ruled well, but later he fell under evil and possibly insane influences and instituted wholesale massacres of large sections of the population which he considered to be his enemies. It was during this period that he destroyed Novgorod.

<sup>1</sup> It is true that Ivan, wishing to cultivate friendly relations with England, proposed in 1582 to marry one of Queen Elizabeth's Maids of Honour, Lady Mary Hastings, daughter of Henry, Earl of Huntingdon, when he had got rid of his seventh wife, who was still alive. Lady Mary Hastings did not, however, go to Russia, since the negotiations between the two Courts were so protracted that they were eventually terminated by Ivan's death. The Russian scene in *Love's Labour's Lost* (Act V, Scene 2) is believed to have been suggested to Shakespeare by the visit to England of Ivan's ambassador, Pissemsky, who made the proposal to Elizabeth. Had Ivan lived, it seems probable that Elizabeth, in spite of the Czar's ferocious character which frightened her Maid of Honour, would have obliged Lady Mary Hastings to accept the proposal in order to advance English commercial interests in Russia. The episode has been described in the light of recent research by Count G. Bennigsen in an interesting article entitled "Queen Elizabeth and Ivan the Terrible", published in *The Nineteenth Century* (March, 1926).

powers of the fairy's, and at length they literally *sent a bridge* to our assistance, for a man appear'd standing on a floating Raft working it towards us with the help of a rope which was thrown across the Water and fasten'd on each Shore. On this we encamp'd body, bones and all, Coaches, Horses, drivers (*Mushiks*) &c. &c. and with infinite composure the whole machine began to move to the sound of the *Mushiks*' stentorian lungs which Yell'd the native music of the country, till we found ourselves begin to drive on dry ground as fresh as ever on the opposite bank.

The country does not present much Variety at present. Wooden Villages interrupt the long and generally strait Wooden roads; and at one of these Wooden Cottages you stop to refresh your self with either their excellent milk and brown bread or your own store of provisions as often as you like. Now and then a Town, brilliant with the numerous gilded Spires and Domes of Churches, produces an effect from contrast that is very curious. The Peasants one and all please me, from the frolicksome Variety of their Dresses, their grouping together in cheerful gay looking odd societys. Here and there you will see a country girl with a head dress of gold and ear rings necklace &c of tinsel, evidently acting the Bell of the Village and receiving tributes of admiration, envy &c, &c, from all her companions. They dance frequently, but the Sluggish Men Gossip in distinct partys and seldom join in any of the Village amusements. I think the Men handsomer than the Women in general, but I give you my word both are as superior to Irish people of the same class as one nation can well be to another.

Travelling in this way for six nights and five days, we woke on the sixth morning in as pretty a country as I ever beheld of Hills and dales &c. &c. and a pretty little river winding amongst them. Doc<sup>r</sup> Halliday had a friend who liv'd in the midst of this Scenery, and we proceeded directly to his House. We found him and most of his *large* family at home and enchanted to see the Doc<sup>r</sup>—*Large* I may say in two senses for such Monsters as both father and all the Children are only to be found amongst the *Brobdingnags*. The Mother is dead—she was English and most of them speak the language very well. They appear simple, unaffected, and like the pretty Wild scenery which surrounds them. In the Evenings they dance in the most graceful elegant manner,



and then call in some of their Slaves to amuse you by Pantomime exhibitions which their dancing approaches to very nearly. The name is Brotzorff.

*Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>, Moscow*

“ Here I am indeed at last ; and, thank Heaven, well after all my fatigues. I found on my arrival an officer who spoke french and had orders from Princess D. to do everything I wish’d. His wife is in the House, but only speaks Russ. The servant who attended me from St Petersburg is to return there immediately, so I cannot have the satisfaction of telling you of my meeting with the Princess, but as soon as it is possible you may be sure I will. There is a relation of the Princess’s who has been here a week, waiting to conduct me to Troitska. We set out on Tuesday. I wish I had more time to write, but this opportunity must not be lost tho’ it does not take me to the end of my journey. Doc<sup>r</sup> & Mr<sup>s</sup> Halliday were excellent people. I am to dine with them to-day and to-morrow with a M<sup>dm</sup> I forget what but a niece of the Princess.

Adieu my dearest father & mother. Ten thousand blessings attend you all.

*To HER FATHER*

*TROITSKA. August 25<sup>th</sup> New Style 1803*

“ Again an opportunity of sending a letter to St Petersburg presents itself, and tho’ I have only my reception here to add to the contents of my last letter, yet judging of the impatience of my dearest family on the subject of hearing from me by *mine*, I will even communicate that single circumstance rather than omit an opportunity of writing to them.

At five o’clock yesterday I arrived accompanied by a M<sup>dme</sup> Merlin and her daughter, near relations of the Princess’s. The daughter is young, the mother a friendly kind hearted Woman as I ever met with.<sup>1</sup> As the Princess was out in her grounds, this Lady went to meet her first I really believe to prepossess her

<sup>1</sup> Anastasia Merlin, daughter of M. Basil Lachinova by his wife, *née* Princess Maria Daschkaw. Her mother was a sister of Princess Daschkaw’s late husband.

in my favor, for her reception of me was that of the kindest affection. She address'd me in English which she speaks fluently, and in the course of the Evening we had a good deal of conversation ; amongst other things she mention'd her acquaintance with you, my dear father, at Lord Sussex's,<sup>1</sup> and appears to have the most perfect recollection of everything and everybody she ever met with in her travels. Her appearance is milder than I expected from what I heard at St Petersburg.<sup>2</sup> Her Dress a Man's night cap and black hat with a sort of dark *robe de Chambre*. Her manners easy, and a certain something that distinguishes her not unpleasingly from the common herd. This is merely the *coup d'œil*. You now know I am in safety after all my Journeying by Sea and Land. I shall have leisure to write particulars in the course of a month or so.

I must tell you the Princess has been amusing herself preparing what she calls two English trunks for me which have arrived without her knowledge of my apartments—one containing Shawls, a piece of home made linnen, silks, and many other things ; the other, paper, Sealing wax &c. &c. all of which marks a sort of goodnature and attention that is of a thousand times more value than the things themselves. This place is splendid. Her English taste provides, and she has really created from rather a barren situation one of the most lovely and magnificent places that is to be found any where ! The weather is *scorching*, but there are contrivances for cooling as well as for heating the rooms, and we eat Ice whenever we chuse. The day or two I spent at

<sup>1</sup> Henry (Yelverton), 3rd Earl of Sussex, married in 1757 Hester, daughter of John Hall of Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts., and first cousin of Martha Wilmot's father. It was whilst visiting the Sussex's about 1777 that Princess Daschkaw made the acquaintance of Edward Wilmot.

<sup>2</sup> Writing some years later of her experiences in Russia Martha Wilmot thus describes the impression of the Princess which she gained while staying at the house of Mme. Poliansky : " She was represented to me as a most cruel and vindictive person, violent in her temper, and destructive of the happiness of every creature who was unfortunate enough to approach her. I was told that she lived in a castle situated in a dreary solitude, far removed from the society of any civilized beings, where she was all-powerful, and so devoid of principle that she would invariably break open and read the letters which came to me, and those I sent to my friends, taking care to suppress any that might be displeasing to her." M. Bradford to Lord Glenbervie : Jan. 1813. *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, ii, 224-25.

Moscow, *en passant*, I was introduced to Prince Dashkaw,<sup>1</sup> and I can give you some idea of his appearance by telling you that he struck me with so strong a resemblance to Archdeacon Thomson<sup>2</sup> that I cou'd not help telling him of it which charm'd him, as 'he hopes I shall love him as my own Countree Man'. He is a man of the most honorable character and perfectly well bred, which is a more serious comfort to me that I can tell you.

The Princess is far from Well and her friends speak of her as breaking fast. Her Physician however (doc<sup>r</sup> Rogerson) told me her life was a long one—Heaven only knows. At all events, 'tis a happiness to me that her son merits one's esteem; and already he has assur'd me that I shall always find him a brother,

<sup>1</sup> Prince Paul Daschkaw (1793-1807), Russian general. Son of Princess Daschkaw and her late husband, Prince Michael Daschkaw. The Empress Catherine II was his godmother. Princess Daschkaw sent him to be educated at Edinburgh University under the distinguished scholars Robertson and Blair. Dr. William Drennan, the United Irish poet, who was a contemporary student at Edinburgh and to whom he rendered some trifling service at this time (1777), wrote that "Prince Dashkoff attends his classes with great assiduity and has perfectly melted away all the Russian Boorishness in French courtesy." After graduating with distinction from Edinburgh he travelled extensively in Europe with his mother. Prior to joining the Russian army he was for a short time *aide-de-camp* to the Prussian king Frederick the Great, who was much impressed by his handsome appearance and good manners. Chiefly, it appears, through his mother's influence and the friendship of the powerful minister Prince Potemkin he attained high military rank. An attempt on the part of the Orloff faction at Court to instal him as the Empress's favourite was, however, thwarted by his mother. On the accession of Paul I in 1796 he became a close confidant of the Czar, who consulted him on all his military plans; he was given supreme command of the army at Kiev, and for some years he exercised a considerable influence in the direction of political affairs. Not long before Paul's assassination he was suddenly dismissed for befriending a nobleman who was imprisoned at Kiev—in the words of the mad Czar, "As you meddle with things which do not concern you."

In 1788 he had married clandestinely, and against his mother's wishes, Anne, daughter of a merchant named Simon Alferoff, and the difference which resulted between him and his mother was never effectually reconciled. The marriage turned out to be unhappy and was without issue. Prince Daschkaw soon left his wife for another lady, who bore him three children and with whom he was now (1803) living in Moscow. On his death, which took place while Martha Wilmot was in Russia, see below, p. 277 *et seq.* Having no legitimate children his estate passed under his will to his second cousin, Count Ivan Woronzow, who later became his mother's heir and took the name of Woronzow-Daschkaw. His natural children were brought up by his sister Mme. Scherbenin.

<sup>2</sup> Ven. William Thompson, Archdeacon of Cork. He was married to Martha Wilmot's sister-in-law, Mary, daughter of the Rev. John Chetwood of Glanmire, County Cork.



PRINCESS DASCHKAW

*From the portrait by D. Levitsky in the possession of the Reverend E. M. Walker*



if I will consider him as such. A young Lady, a niece of the Princess's, lives in the House always. At Moscow she sees a great deal of company. Here she is very retir'd.

Adieu my ever dear father and mother.

*After dinner.* I told the Princess I had written to you. She requested me to add her best compliments to you and my darling Mother with some flattering speeches which you are to suppose on my account. However I must tell you that she bids me assure you she will study my happiness as if I were her own child. She remembers my grand Mother and all the Lota<sup>1</sup> family perfectly and hitherto her manners to me are those of the most distinguish'd kindness.

Adieu.

#### TO HER MOTHER

TROITSKA. *September 5<sup>th</sup> 1803*

"... I was a fool to beg nobody wou'd write politicks. On the contrary in a moment so dreadfully critical as the present (for rumours of the Irish insurrection has reach'd us) a little truth from Home would be truly precious to me, and not at all dangerous. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The second day after my arrival here I wrote to my father giving an account of the affectionate & kind reception which I met with from the Princess D. Every day since has been mark'd by an increase of attention and apparent partiality &c. &c. &c. &c. . . .

I'll tell you pretty nearly how my day is divided. I rise at

<sup>1</sup> Martha Wilmot's maternal grandmother was Catherine, daughter of Colonel Christopher Rogers of Lota, County Cork. She married in 1740 the Rev. Charles Moore, Rector of Innishannon, and their daughter Martha became the wife of Captain Edward Wilmot. In her childhood Martha Wilmot spent a great deal of her time at Lota, where her grandmother was living. All the members of the Rogers family were very musical, and Handel stayed with them when he visited Ireland. "Lota was always considered amongst the first establishments of the county and it was thought an honour to be received there as a visitor," noted Martha Wilmot in a memorandum which she wrote many years later (1856). "The Princess Daschkaw told me that when she was in Ireland in the year 1779 Lota was the house where her reception gave her the greatest pleasure, and where the talents and refined manners of the family had left on her memory the most agreeable impression."

<sup>2</sup> The rising in Dublin led by Robert Emmet had lately been suppressed.

half after seven, breakfast on Coffee in my own room which is a most cheerful agreeable and well furnished apartment. At eleven or twelve I visit the Princess in hers and we chat, sometimes about Kings and Empresses and sometimes about Wheat and rye for half an hour or so. I then return to my own room and Dress, or not, just as I like &c. &c. &c—I read the Psalms &c every Day as such a thing as a Protestant Church is not known here—and at two we dine, our Dinner superb and well dress'd with Cleanliness and delicacy. A niece of the Princess's lives with her constantly, Miss Islainoff or Anna Petrovna by which name she is best known.<sup>1</sup> She is very gentle and amiable, and thank my stars does not speak English, so that we are obliged to converse in French which improves me. I am beginning to pick up some Russian words. . . . From dinner we retire to the Drawing room till four, and then go out to Walk in the beautiful Grounds of Troitska. . . .

A mixture of familiarity and Pride appears to me to be a striking characteristic of this country. 'Tis by no means uncommon to see Masters and Slaves mingle in the same dance, and in visiting at a strange House, I have been more than once puzzled to find out which was the Mistress and which the *femme de Chambre*. Another Custom is that of maintaining a Fool in many of the first Houses. At Moscow I dined with a family of high noblesse where soon after dinner I was dreadfully startled by loud words and apparent battling between two people, when a wild fantastic looking figure dress'd as a Slave rush'd into the Drawing room where several guests were assembled, follow'd by one of the company who was amusing himself by her passion and extravagance. She instantly went up to the master of the house (M. Merlin) and by her expression and action it was very evident she was giving him a scolding. Presently she flew towards me,

<sup>1</sup> Anna Islenieff, daughter of Lieut-General Peter Islenieff and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of M. Peter Hrouschoff. Her grandmother Hrouschoff, *née* Countess Daria Woronzow, was a sister of Princess Daschkaw's father, Count Roman Woronzow. Anna Petrovna (as she was called) was brought up in the Princess's house, and on the latter's death in 1810 she placed a memorial tablet over her grave in the village church at Troitskoe. She later married the distinguished Russian archeologist A. F. Malinowsky. In 1813 she stood sponsor at the baptism of Catherine Anne Daschkaw Bradford, the first child born to Martha Wilmot (then Mrs. William Bradford).

and with tears and the most dreadful rage shut her fist as if preparing for a boxing match. I beg'd them to explain it and felt really alarm'd, when I found some Wit had been exciting her jealousy, and persuaded the poor creature that I had estrang'd the affections of a man she fancy'd herself married to. I intreated them to appease her, and with infinite difficulty she was at last persuaded to kiss my hand in token of her forgiveness. . . .

About eleven we retire for the night. I am wrap'd up in a black and yellow silk Shawl from morning till night, because it is the fashion ; and the Princess has given me a large turkish one which here cost near 30 Guineas and in England wou'd be worth I suppose fifty or sixty. Yesterday a Gentleman arrived from Constantinople and brought her three bottles of attar of roses, one of which she kept, one gave to Anna Petrovna, and one to me—likewise some Turkey Slippers more curious than beautiful. Does this letter smell sweet ? for I have perfum'd it. In Decem<sup>r</sup> we are to travel on a sledge to Moscow where dearest M<sup>rs</sup> Chetwood's present of Lace will cut a Dash for it is the pink of the mode. They are great Dressers here, and consider themselves greatly superior to the people of St Petersburg !

9<sup>th</sup> [September]

“ Two Cloaks have arrived from Moscow of a Splendor that wou'd *dazzle your eyes*. No literally, one is of Grey Satin lined with fur and trimm'd all round with Sable, just the shape of Celia's rug, hood and all—the other (same shape) is of black wadded Silk for less magnificent occasions. She has likewise order'd two real Pelisses for me lined throughout with skin. How my small ladyship will ever be able to support their weight is the question ! In short I'm convinc'd 1200 roubles would not defray the purchases she has made for my comfort and adornment. When I add to this her unabating kindness of manner and the attentions and regard of her amiable niece I cannot but acknowledge I am peculiarly fortunate—but to say I am perfectly happy while War throws random shots I know not where, and my fancy often pictures Irish insurrections & french invasions while I am so far from home, wou'd be to say a little more than the truth.



The Princess often gets the English papers and that is no small comfort. In short I have taken fast hold of Hope, and am resolv'd not to let her escape me till she lands me at the other side of the Baltic whenever my hour arrives. The Princess is, you know, a red hot English Woman, so we read the papers and fight with a degree of Valour that would amaze you under the British flag, as we sit on Scarlet and Gold Sophas. This Evening she suggested an idea which I really think excellent, that the most perfect union wou'd be establish'd between England and Ireland were the King to reside and even call his Parliament in the latter Kingdom at Stated periods—thus becoming acquainted with Ireland and blending the interests of both Countrys by raising the consequence of the *little Green Island* and exciting the affections of his Irish subjects. . . .

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Sat 17<sup>th</sup> [September]*

"In the Eve<sup>g</sup> a letter from M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton to Princess D. & to me containing an account of my precious Kitty, being confin'd as a Prisoner in Florence with the M<sup>t</sup> Cashells.<sup>1</sup> How dreadful are the times, when a journey of pleasure & amusement ends in imprisonment! To Kitty this will not be matter of much concern, & as I trust in the Almighty she is *safe*, I feel less uneasy about her than I do about the dreadful convulsed state of Ireland & the threats of an Invasion. May Heaven preserve them from the horrors of *french Invasion*! the very thought of it chills my blood.

*Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>*

"... The Princess produced from her stores some Moscow silks & warm stockings. She presented Anna Petrovna & me with dresses of the former & a couple of p<sup>r</sup> of the latter.

After supper she conversed a long time, first on the Russians attachment to good Masters & their Generosity Gratitude &c bringing forward instances to prove it which does honour to

<sup>1</sup> Martha Wilmot's sister Catherine was still exploring France and Italy with the Mount Cashell family. See above, Introduction, p. xxi.

Paul & his crueltys.<sup>1</sup> Mem : the Iron Carr w<sup>ch</sup> he invented for human nature. After this she spoke of the reign of the Emperor transporting Victims to Siberia Seal'd with the Imperial Signet till their arrival at the Governor's House. One instance is too dreadful for humanity of two victims being thus enclosed. At the end of some time when the Keeper as usual came to supply the miserable victims with bread & water thro' the only hole that was left open for that purpose, he heard a faint voice praying for pity that either they would kill him or remove the dead body of his companion which began to putrify by his side. What was to be done ? 'twas death to remove the Seal, & in that situation of horror too dreadful for utterance was he dragged on ! Mem : all persons obliged to quit their carriage when he pass'd in *all* weathers, instance of a lady who eluded his vengeance after having committed the crime of omitting the above ceremony by giving the name of a person who was dying, his rage &c ! When he had the *misfortune* of being too well obey'd, his seeking *incog* for victims of wrath & calling this his amusement of *the Chase*. Mem : general orders for every person to dine at one o'clock because he dined at that hour, general *tranquillity* of the streets when he appear'd for everybody *fled* at his approach as from a Tyger, his bright idea of breaking a passage through a y<sup>d</sup> &  $\frac{1}{4}$  of ice in order to plant trees & *overcome* Nature, meeting an English Man on the Walk, his order to him to work with the other Labourers &c. &c.

<sup>1</sup> Paul I (1754-1801), Czar of Russia. Son of Peter III and Catherine II but gossip (probably incorrectly) has attributed his paternity to a Colonel Serge Saltykov in the Guards. During his mother's reign he lived mostly at his estate of Gatchina, near St Petersburg, where he spent his time drilling a brigade of soldiers on Prussian lines. Here he showed signs of mental abnormality, while his short reign, which commenced on Catherine's death in 1796, proved him without doubt to be a madman. One of his first acts was to repeal the law exempting the free classes of the Russian population from corporal punishment and mutilation. He also forbade the wearing of waistcoats, on the ground that they had caused the French Revolution. He had many of the nobility imprisoned and sent to Siberia for imaginary or trifling offences. Since no one felt immune from exile or brutality, a conspiracy was organised against him by his chief minister, Count Pahlen, and he was strangled in his bedroom at the Michael Palace in St Petersburg by several officers of the Guards on the night of March 11, 1801.

23<sup>rd</sup> [September]

"... In the Eve<sup>s</sup> the Princess talk'd a little of the wonderful scenes of the revolution in w<sup>ch</sup> she acted so wonderful a part at the age of 18. The Empress Katherine was 16 years older than her.<sup>1</sup> 'tis a curious circumstance that Peter 3<sup>d</sup> was Godfather to Princess Dashkoff who as she says herself 'I dethroned'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Catherine II (1729-1796), Empress of Russia, known as "the Great." Daughter of Christian Augustus, Duke of Anhalt-Zerbst and his wife Johanna Elizabeth of Holstein-Gottorp. Taken on a visit to Russia in 1744, where she married the Empress Elizabeth's nephew and heir, the Grand Duke Peter. Her comparatively short period of married life was unhappy by reason of Peter's mental peculiarities. In 1762 her husband became Czar as Peter III, but in the same year was dethroned and murdered as the result of a conspiracy headed by Count Gregory Orloff in which Princess Daschkaw took part. Catherine now became Empress, and although a German by birth she showed in her long reign of thirty-four years that she could identify herself completely with the aims of the Russian people. In public life she was ambitious and unscrupulous, and the substantial extensions of Russian territory which took place at the expense of Poland and Turkey during this period must be attributed mainly to her policy. Her intellectual interests were varied and pronounced and she endeavoured, not without considerable success to impose upon the country a new culture dictated by French ideas. She corresponded continuously with Voltaire and Frederick the Great, employed Grimm to collect works of art for her, and made a digest of Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* with her own hand. She became notorious by reason of her many lovers, though in comparison with her political achievements this aspect of her life has probably been exaggerated.

<sup>2</sup> Peter III (1728-1762), Czar of Russia. Only son of the Empress Anne and Charles Frederick, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp. Adopted by his aunt, the Empress Elizabeth, in 1741 and a few years later married to Princess Sophia of Anhalt-Zerbst, who now became the Grand Duchess Catherine. Physically and mentally abnormal he soon found life impossible with a wife of such prodigious intellect as Catherine. He accordingly took as his mistress and companion Countess Elizabeth Woronzow, Princess Daschkaw's elder sister, and lived with her at Peterhof, where he spent much of his time drilling a brigade of Holstein troops. He worshipped the Prussian king Frederick the Great and signalled his accession in January 1762 by surrendering to him all Prussian territory gained by Russia during the Seven Years' War. In less than six months he was dethroned in favour of his wife (June 29, 1762), as the result of a conspiracy headed by Gregory Orloff and assisted by Princess Daschkaw. He was taken to the Castle of Ropscha, near St Petersburg, where he asked only for his mistress, his dog, his negro Narcisse, his violin, some romances and a German Bible. Here he was murdered shortly afterwards by several of the conspirators led by Alexis Orloff and Prince Theodor Bariatinsky. Catherine II disapproved of the act on moral grounds, but she did not punish any of the participants. See below, p. 67, note 2.

Sat 24<sup>th</sup>

“ As usual.

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>

“ I accompanied the Princess & Anna Petrovna to Church. Mem : the Priest was oblig'd to employ a substitute to perform the service, being too tipsy to go thro' it himself. The Princess in an audible voice told the young Man who was reading prayers that *he* was not entitled to read certain portions of the service, & having with much devotion & even tears saluted two or three Images she would not wait for the remainder of their ceremonies but abruptly quitted the Church, call'd for *Fidelle* (as it would be an *abomination* that requir'd purification if a Dog enter'd a Church) and then proceeded to her *Plantations* where attended by several of her Vassels she *laboured* till dinner time & again for several hours in the Eve<sup>g</sup>.

Monday 26<sup>th</sup>

“ As usual. This Eve<sup>g</sup> in the Grange the Wives of the livery servants, grooms &c (who are dress'd quite differently from the Peasants Wives) sang most delightfully. It was actually a concert 4, 5 & 6 people singing different parts in the most perfect harmony. The servants of the Princess are in general dress'd much like English Sailors, one or two in white linnen Jacket & trowsers, but of a day that company is expected their liverys are Superb, all embroider'd with lace. Sometimes they perform pieces of music during Dinner. All of them sing & most of them play on some Instrument. The *femmes de Chambre* sing also, of course—their dancing too is wonderfully characteristic, they sing all the time & vary their *Action* & Steps according to the little *Romance* which they sing with a degree of sentiment or gaiety, & *always* with a degree of gracefulness that is quite Native &, I believe, peculiar to themselves. In general their songs are melancholy, & the expression of their countenances serious—yet they are always singing & appear to enjoy as much happiness as any other race of People less shackled perhaps by the peculiar customs of their country.

The ingenuity of the Russians is striking in various instances, amongst others the embroidery of their clothes. The head dresses are really curious. If a Young Woman presents you with

a bowl of milk or eggs or nuts &c. &c. you will always find hanging on her arm or covering the little basket a towel embroider'd at each end, either with white thread in imitation of lace, or with red ditto, and work'd with a delicacy to which few accomplish'd Ladys could attain, even with practice & instruction. They never fail to imitate with correctness any new fashion for their Masters, but with regard to dress the lower orders of People are so attach'd to their respective *traditionary Costumes* that even in the same village you may distinguish new comers from old inhabitants as *neither* party will alter a single point in conformity to the other, & the Peasant of Tware is as differently attired from the same class of Person at Moscow or at S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg as the Wild Indian is from the European.

*Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> [September]*

“ Read a little, work'd a little, walk'd a little &c. Visited the Mother of the Priest, a woman of 120 years of age ! Except her sight all her senses are perfect. She talks well & remembers everything, but her appearance is dreadful & she says the bones are coming through her skin from lying so constantly in one posture. At such a period of life how melancholy is the picture it presents ! The Cottage which this poor soul (her children & I know not how many generations besides *Poultry & other pets*) inhabits is so heated that 'tis almost suffocating to enter it.

*Wed. 28<sup>th</sup>*

“ Usual.

*Thurs<sup>v</sup> 29<sup>th</sup>*

“ Most truly happy was I made this Eve<sup>g</sup> by letters from Home, one from my precious dear Father & Harriet & another from my darling Alicia ! Thank Heaven the accounts from home are most cheering. They send me to bed with a much lighter heart than usual. . . .

TO HER FATHER

TROITSKA. *October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1803*

“ To express to my ever dearest father the heart felt rapture with which I espied his well known writing in a letter which I

received the day before yesterday is indeed impossible. . . . A thousand thousand anxieties on your accounts had made a letter from home a matter of such moment that I do assure you I thought poor Katinka (the woman who brought your letter to my room) would have broke her bones running so fast with it ; while one by one almost every creature in the house came to congratulate me. But I cou'd not for my life help smiling at the joy of my own pretty little *femme de Chambre* who did not arrive till after the others—and no wonder, when poor Sophia was loaded with a Pye of such dimentions fresh from the oven that I thought she must have sunk under the weight. She had also provided little baked Cakes, and in a most artless and affectionate manner beg'd *Mavra Romanovna* would *coucheet* (eat) and she was *Ochin Harrasha* (very glad) *Mavra Romanovna* had heard from her *Batushka* (father) and truly truly glad my own *Batushka* was I to receive your letter. . . . The pleasure your letter excited was not confin'd to me nor to the kind hearted Domestics of the family. Princess Dashkaw who had with cordial affection and kindness shared my disquiet on the State of Hibernia and my hopes and fears on the aforesaid subject of despatches partook also of the pleasure I experienc'd and begs me to say so many handsome things to my Mother that it must end in my saying nothing at all. . . .

It is the genius of this country to be every thing or nothing. A middle state such as happy England boasts is not understood. Was I at St Petersburg I wou'd certainly go to court simply to establish in their prejudiced minds that I am as good as they ; or to come to the point at once A Noble, not a Plebeian, for medium there is none. I need scarcely add that amidst such a multitude of titles a count or countess is often the merest poverty stricken low bread animal that ever was known. Nay, many a Princess have I seen with the air of a fawning tea drinking gossip and retainer. The system of flattery has no bounds. . . . Princess Dashkaw is one of the (no doubt numberless) exceptions to what I have been saying—that is, she does not flatter human being, but her establish'd opinion of herself is such that, if I can make you feel what I mean, it is as if she was distinct from herself and look'd at her own acts and deeds and character with a degree of admiration that she never attempts to express the expression of,

and that with a sort of artlessness that makes one almost forgive her. Her principles are noble and possess'd of influence which extends to *absolute* dominion over the happiness and prosperity of some thousands of Subjects. She invariably exerts it for their welfare, entering into their circumstances ; and by kindness as a Landlord and forbearance &c. &c. placing them in a situation of prosperity not very universally known in this country. As a relation she is everything to her family many of whom, even distant branches, she has push'd forward in life to situations that without her they wou'd never have known. Her son possesses all her amiable qualities and some more. . . .

To HER MOTHER

TROITSKA. *October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1803*

“ . . . Think of our weather being fine eneough for the Princess and me to drive out in a *Droshka*, a sort of Jaunting Car quite expos'd to the air, and I have just left her overseeing her labourers who are sinking a Pond. Her servants are building a Wall, and no Masons could perform better. . . . I believe I have before now spoke of the Versatility of the Russians. It is really astonishing, but the number of servants is dreadful. Think of 2, 3 and often 400 servants to attend a small family. A Russian Lady scorns to use her own feet to go up stairs, and I do not Romance when I assure you that two powder'd footmen support her lily white elbows and nearly lift her from the ground, while a couple more follow with all manner of Shawls, Pelises, &c. &c. &c. There is not a Bell in Russia except to the Churches, but if a fair one gently calls four or five footmen are ready in an antechamber to obey her summons. Princess D. however has no reproach to make to herself on this subject—her servants work like Labourers Order them to sing, and five or six will sing the airs of the country in different parts with a concord and melody that is delightful—others will play on a variety of instruments with equal taste, indebted only to Nature. I have never yet seen a Russ man dance. The women are very fond of dancing, and do so in a stile quite peculiar. We have a little Theatre here, and our labourers, our Cooks, our footmen, and *femmes de Chambres* turn into Princes, Princesses, Shepherds and Shepherdesses &c. &c. and

perform with a degree of spirit that is astonishing. 'tis droll enough to be attended at Supper by the Herd of the piece who has been strutting before your Eyes in Gilded robes &c. &c. for half the Evening. . . .

But I must tell you a slight adventure which I had a week ago occasion'd by my ignorance of the language. You must know we had some days of dreadfully cold Weather, and on one of those days I had retired to my room to read ; while the Princess who is made of Iron chose to encounter the bitter blast and go to the fields as usual— I shou'd say it was Evening as we had dined. I continued sitting near the windows till I was benumb'd in every joint. At length casting my Eyes towards my faithful English Blankets which accompanied me to Troitska, I heard a Voice which say'd or seem'd to say ' Freeze no more Lady, Lady Freeze no more, come to your Warmest friends, and they will restore you to life and feeling '. I instantly obey'd, and propt up on twenty Pillows with my stone cold feet snugly wrap'd up in the Blankets I once more began to read. The door open'd without ever rapping (for that's the fashion here) and a footman enter'd. I own I felt rather displeas'd, however one may as well be good-humour'd as cross when one has no language to scold in, so I sat quite patient listening to a long harrangue in Russ of which I understood but one word and that was *Knagina* (Princess) my bright genious immediately fill'd up the remainder, and I concluded the Princess wish'd to say something to me which Petrushio was endeavouring to explain beforehand. I therefore resolv'd to go to her and with infinite spirit I answer'd him '*Ochin Hariasha*' (very well). He actually caper'd with delight at having been so clever as to make me understand his speech for nothing cou'd be more *à propos* than my answer. Accordingly he quitted the room, and I continued to read in order to finish my chapter when the door open'd a second time and—oh nymphs who hope to warm your feet on Blankets in the noon day, ye only can judge of my dismay when a very elegant young man, an *utter stranger*, appear'd before me. Whether he was Russian, French, Dutch, German Spanish or English I knew not. I jumped off the Pavillion, try'd to shoot Petrushio with my Eyes for his folly, and by the time I reach'd the door the Stranger told me, in french, he had brought a letter for Princess D. from her son. This was far from throwing



any light on the subject, so resolving to take him for a Russian, I requested him, as I did not understand the language, to desire the servant would take the letter to the Princess who was out walking, and that he wou'd follow me to the drawing room. The poor man was as badly off as myself, so I was oblig'd to have recourse to signs, and at length despatch'd Petrushio.

Before we had pass'd thro' the 5<sup>th</sup> room leading to the Staircase, I found my companion was an Englishman. With one accord therefore we laid aside our borrow'd tongue and convers'd in our natural one—but I honestly own I shou'd have prefer'd his being of any other nation considering the foolish scene we had just gone through. However there was no help for it ; and as I found he was very well bred, well inform'd &c. &c. I was dying to know who it cou'd be when the Princess came in and reliev'd my curiosity by wellcoming with particular cordiality the son of her old friend Lord Malmesbury who was ambassador at Petersburg and since that at Paris. He slept here of course, and in the Evening we had a touch of all the Courts and Cabinets in Europe. I suspect Mr Harris (that's his name) is preparing himself to be an ambassador and visiting foreign Countrys with that idea.<sup>1</sup> We had rather too much of Politics, that's all the fault I found with him. At Supper the Princess ask'd me if I wou'd not invite my country man to breakfast with me. I am the only determin'd breakfast eater in the House, and Anna Petrovna comes every morning with her red Dog *Bijou* to breakfast with me in my room. Of course I was very happy &c. &c. I don't above half like this custom. I feel as if it was so ridiculous with about 29 reception rooms in a House to fix upon my little Appartment for a Stranger to breakfast in. However 'at Rome you must do as they do at Rome', so he drank our Coffee and tea, and he eat two Eggs that a young girl brought me as a present the day before, and that part of the Story went off very agreeably. After dinner He quitted us to continue his journey to the Krimea.

<sup>1</sup> Hon. Thomas Harris (1782-1823), younger son of James, 1st Earl of Malmesbury, the well-known diplomatist. Was lineally descended from the English king Henry VII and Elizabeth Plantagenet. Was later ordained and became Probendary of York. Married in 1812 Marie, daughter of Rev. George Markham.

24<sup>th</sup> [September]

"The Princess is very unwell this Evening. She is sometimes extremely weak ; again she rallies, and is as strong as Hercules. Sick or well, she is affectionate and kind to me—indeed her kindness and magnificence knows no bounds. Her partiality to me and her expressions of gratitude to you both for confiding me to her care are extreme. She charges me to present her compliments to you both, and says she only wishes you cou'd peep into her heart to read there her Sentiments for me. These are her own words. . . .

From HER JOURNAL

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>

"Almost all day with the Princess who is still unwell & out of spirits. I went out with her on the Droschka. Conversation—her flattering expressions of *maternal* affection for me. In the Eve<sup>g</sup> a letter from dear M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton which contains most comfortable accounts from home, & blessed be God it contains likewise the happy intelligence of my darling Kate's escape from Florence to Vienna.

To HER MOTHER

TROITSKA. 17 Novem<sup>r</sup>, N.S. 1803

"... You ask me what Dance I figur'd in at St Petersburg. Can you doubt my Patriotism ? In truth it was an *Irish jig* to the tune, the lovely tune, of Paddy O'Rafferty, and I have repeated it here to the admiration of all beholders. 'Tis all the love of Novelty that has made our Style of dancing quite the order of the day, in general here ; for the native dances of the Russians, and one they call the Gypsies' dance, is the most picturesque Graceful thing I ever saw. When we go to Moscow Princess D. is to ask for a Ball (for that is the way We great folks compliment our friends) at Count Orloff's, whose Daughter is quite celebrated for dancing and other Virtues—and there I am to see all the real Russian dances perform'd in the best style. The young Countess is niece to the *famous Orloff* of Katherine's Day.<sup>1</sup> . . .

<sup>1</sup> Prince Gregory Orloff (1734-1783) was the favourite of the Empress Catherine II. He led the conspiracy to dethrone Peter III, and on its

You hope Russia will be our friend. How ardently do I hope it too, but you know as much of the matter as any one here unless it is the privy Council. Query, whether We know our own Minds. How brave and spirited it is in England to assert herself and rest on her own power as she does, for too true it is that power may attract friends but want of assistance will rarely obtain them. . . . But I will quit a subject on which I have little pleasant to say and nothing to communicate. This country which is about ten or twelve years younger than many others is imbibing the *illuminati* principles which the indefatigable French are spreading with their accustom'd dexterity. They are such admirable underminers that I only wish some thousands of them were following their natural bent in Siberia where there are mines of inestimable value that want nothing but hands enough to bring their treasures to light ; this wou'd be a pretty employment for their active geniuses and serve the greater part of Europe essentially in two ways. . . .

People may talk of Russia as they please, but here is the 22<sup>d</sup> of November, and we have had bright sunshine with a slight agreeable frost, no more than makes the Walks dry and pleasant.

Every Morning I am presented with a lump of Ice as large as a tumbler glass, and with that I boldly scrub my face—this is a Russia fashion and I do it because I am told it gives a complexion, which Complexion I prefer to rouge which I think is hideous us'd as the ladies of Moscow use it. . . . But when the Ladies rouge so unmercifully, is it not a curious fasion which they have to kiss both cheeks thro' *thick* and *thin* ? This is a mode of Salutation I think dreadfully ungraceful. But I must tell you how the Men and Women salute each other. When a gentleman arrives

success Catherine ennobled him and his brothers and made him Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces. After his supersession as favourite he travelled abroad, where he became insane. He married his niece, Catherine Zinovieff, but his marriage was without issue. In connection with his relations with the Empress he is chiefly remembered by reason of the famous diamond which was called after him. The Orloff diamond was originally stolen by a French soldier from an idol in a Brahmin temple in Mysore, was stolen again by a ship's captain, and eventually found its way to Amsterdam, where it was purchased by Prince Orloff for £90,000. He presented it to the Empress, who had it set in a sceptre. It is now preserved with the rest of the Russian Crown Jewels in the Palace of Art (formerly Winter Palace) in Leningrad. It weighs 194½ carats and is tinged with yellow.

the Lady presents her hand which he stoops to kiss, and she at the same moment kisses his forehead. Stranger or acquaintance, 'tis all the same and as common as our bows and Curtseys. . . . I bathe sometimes in a warm bath, which is another fashion, and a most agreeable one. The Stoves also, tho' not as cheerful as a fire, are, I must acknowledge, more successful in heating a room. A Woman heats your Stove before you get up, and that keeps the room perfectly warm and snug till two or three in the morning—indeed it is still warm when it is lit again next day. Wood is, of course, the fuel that's us'd. A window like ours and then a second one before the first, like two lines of Soldiers on parade, keep the rooms quite comfortable. The outside one catches the snow and cold which dares not penetrate to the inside Window which is a quarter of a yard distant from it. The Walls of the Houses are very thick. The history I gave you of the cookery &c. &c. was I believe peculiar to that family, and certainly very disgusting. Here every thing is not only excellent but elegant and delicately clean. The Princess prides herself on her Butter which she pretends is unrivall'd, but I fight the Cork butter against it and enter'd the lists against both her and her son to the extreme amusement of a large company some of whom declared they must visit the renown'd City that presum'd to Challenge the whole World on a subject of such importance. Potatoes too she has in perfection. . . .

My little Sophia who I have already introduced to you is a most comfortable creature—she inhabits the next room to me. In fact I have only four at my disposal. One for my Wardrobe is what diverts me, but winter clothes take up a world of room. Not that one is dress'd differently from English fashions either, but the weight of one Pelisse is eneough to fill a trunk and smother the wearer. Then Boots lined with fur are indispensable if one stirs out. The weather is not yet cold eneough to make those things necessary ; but as they form a part of the Wardrobe they require room. Then the Princess has presented me with a splendid blue Satin Quilt, and as my own Bed, Blankets &c. &c. accompanied me from England, I have quite a little establishment of my own. But you must know if a person comes to visit a friend for a month or two, it is the commonest thing in the World to carry all those necessarys along with them, so don't laugh at my blue Satin

Quilt. 'tis not impossible that I may have it in my power to send you an Eider Down one—I hope it may, for they are quite a treasure. My little Sophia has made me understand that she wishes to present her Duty to my *Matushka* (Mother). You wou'd be diverted at our conversations which are carried on with about twenty words in Russ that I know and half the number in English that she knows.

The Russians are very Clever, quick as thought at catching an idea, faithful copiers of any new invention work or fashion ; excellent thieves, I am told, and possess'd of various good qualities. I speak of the lower orders ; for French instruction has tinctur'd the manners of the higher orders without the polish which charms one into forgetfulness of their want of Sterling Worth.

25<sup>th</sup> [November]

“ . . . Yesterday in the course of conversation the Princess say'd something so like your sentiments on the same subject that I cou'd not help telling her so. She was charm'd and requested I wou'd mention it to you to show you I was not got amongst *Northern Savages*. She added that she felt so many secret lines draw her Affections towards Ireland that were ten years lop'd from her age and constitution, nothing shou'd prevent her from visiting a country where she was sure of meeting kindred minds.

#### To HER MOTHER

MOSCOW. 18<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>, N.S. 1803

“ Here I am, my ever dear Mother, safely arrived after my first Journey in a *Coach without Wheels* and Weather so cold as to freeze your breath the moment it quits your Nostrills. I am quite well in all circumstances but positively the Cold is intolerable.—for the benefit of all lovers of Barometers, be it known that yesterday the cold was 25 degrees and it is expected to increase perhaps to 30. I am perish'd alive whenever a breath of air assails my Hibernian constitution, but the rooms are very Warm. Yesterday the Princess presented me with a Muff in which literally I cou'd almost be pack'd up for the convenience of Carriage. Here a Muff is a necessary Shield which each fair one opposes, on quitting a party, to the first rude blasts of Boreas. Envelop'd in

my fur Mantle, fur Boots, the aforesaid Shield, and nothing on my head (such is fashion) I am to go to the french play to-morrow Evening.

But all in order. We must return to the Coach which quitted Troitska on Tuesday morning, after the Princess &c. &c. had kiss'd with infinite devotion all her favorite Saints in the Church and order'd a prayer to be offer'd by the Priest for a safe Journey &c. &c.—this is a national custom which is generally observ'd and is I think a very respectable one. The Country cover'd with Snow, the forests presenting a White instead of Green foliage (for every tree is richly feather'd with Snow) was a wild and beautiful sight for half an hour, but it pains the Eyes very sensibly after a short time. I do not like the sensation of a Skating Journey—no miserable wretch on board a packet Boat ever suffer'd more than I did from the dull See saw movement on the Ice. We were wrap'd in furs, and a fur Quilt under and over our feet did its best to keep us warm ; but all in vain, and I do assure you that in 12 hours the knap of the cloath which lined the Coach was all over little icicles from our breaths which congeal'd instantly. We slept at Serpoukoff, and according to the Russian fashion took our Beds &c. with us. During the day the maid servants place them in a *Kibitka*, a Carriage which looks exactly like a large Cradle, in which three or four people lie or sit with great ease, but in general they make long Journeys day and night just as if they were in Bed.

The Following morning by Star light we set out again. The Sky is exquisitely beautiful at night, so sparkling with Stars and the Milky Way so constantly to be seen that I shou'd be dispos'd to turn a Sentimental lunatic, were it not for the chilling cold which makes a dull but warm Stove a much more agreeable object. At five o'clock we reach'd Moscow which is a Town of such magnitude as is astonishing. The multitude of Churches exceeds belief, and almost all have gilded Domes and Spires. Judge therefore the effect from the Hill just before one enters the first Magnificent Gate. The Princess's house is absolutely a Palace, but unfinish'd.<sup>1</sup> I must introduce you to my corner of it, which I told you the dear and realy beloved Princess was interest-

<sup>1</sup> This house was situated in the fashionable Nikitsky Boulevard to the west of the Kremlin. During the French invasion of Moscow in 1812 it was burnt, and its magnificent library completely destroyed.

ing herself so much about. You enter an antichamber where by the by, a beautiful boy who she calls my servant generally remains. A sort of Screen separates this from Sophia's apartment. You then enter a second antichamber well furnish'd in which there is a looking Glass of magnificent size &c. &c. &c. The folding doors to the left hand leads into my favorite room in which there is a Pianoforte, a most elegant Bureau where all my writing impliments are arranged in the compleatest order. Over the Bureau hangs the Princess's picture, a Chest of drawers inlaid with a Marble top is plac'd just under a second looking Glass of the same size as the first. A sort of division like a Screen conceals my Iron Bed from public view, and to say truth divides the room into two apartments the second of which is snugness itself.

Having paraded you thro' my House, I must now introduce you to the Society of some of our Stars and Garter acquaintances. First and foremost comes his little highness Prince Mavrocordat, Hospidar of Moldavia, who was going to be Strangled by his Subjects (for he is literally a royal personage) and saved himself by flight. He is married to a niece of Princess Daschkaw's.<sup>1</sup> His dress is like a monk's with a magnificent Turkish Shawl instead of a rope for his Belt. His Head is shav'd and cover'd with a scarlet cap. His long beard added to this head dress is eneough to destroy any traces of beauty which nature might have given him, but notwithstanding he is intelligent and agreeable looking. I saw his picture at Troitska and took it for some hero who had existed two hundred years ago. . . . The Princess Mavrocordat is a tall undignified Woman—no more. Princess Kurakin and her pretty daughter are high flyers with very pleasing address and manners.<sup>2</sup> Princess Daschkaw has presented me to all her friends in so partial and flattering a manner that they pay me particular attention, and consequently the reserve and awkwardness of a stranger wears off immediately. Were it not for this, the manner of receiving company is rather tremendous. At the upper end of the room is a red Morocco leather Sopha on which sits the

<sup>1</sup> Prince Alexander Mavrocordato, late Hospodar of Moldavia. He fled to Russia about 1786 and was treated kindly by Catherine II. Was the first to work out a plan for the liberation of Greece. He married Alexandra, daughter of Count Leon Santy and granddaughter of Princess Daschkaw's aunt, Countess Pelagia Woronzow. He died in 1819.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 389, note 2.

Princess. At the opposite end of the room is the door. Princes, Counts, Countesses &c. &c. &c. Diamond sword Knots, orders of the first, second, third rank, some scarlet ribbands, some blue &c. &c. enter ; salute according to the fashion of the Country which I have described to you ; then sit down and converse. No blazing fire collects the shivering part of Society, no Card table is a refuge for Stragglers and an amusement to Players, no window seats or corners animate flirtation. But the circle is compleat, and every word which is utter'd returns its own sound upon your astonish'd ear and is distinctly heard by every other (unless perchance they are deaf). Do not suppose they talk of the Punic War taste and the musical Glasses ! Believe me the gentle accents of flattery and the sweet Soothing Sounds of Scandal bear their part ; and the little I have seen of different Societys convinces me that 40 people of the same rank in 40 different places will say and Do nearly the same things, some stupidly, some agreeably, but that the Variety of human disposition is to be found in a smaller compass than the whole world.

'tis very diverting to listen to the little Cabals which busy around when one does not care a straw for either party—but the Society I have been describing is only the Etherial Assembly ; they neither eat nor drink but go from House to house between the hours of dinner and supper to visit their friends, and this is what we begin to do next week I fancy. We are to feed with our friends in a short time and Dance with them soon after. But you shall hear all, and have my Sentiments just as they come, even if they shou'd contradict each other every day, for I know that is what you like, and I will even tell you how I dress. At present we are all in mourning for the Emperor's sister ;<sup>1</sup> but when one visits a Lady who is going to be married they dress in White. Of a day that any one of a family celebrate the name of the Saint after whom they are call'd, the Visitors dress in colours ; and when one visits a person who is in mourning for a near relation, they always dress in Black. I don't dislike this last sympathy ; at least the first idea was inspired by an amiable principle.

I have in possession for you, my dearest Mother, two little Bottles of Attar of roses which the Princess begs me to present

<sup>1</sup> Grand Duchess Hélène Pavlovna (1784-1803) She married Frederick, Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.



with her kind compliments, and also a Napkin curiously work'd by the peasantry which will please you. Mad<sup>le</sup> Islainoff insists on sending another bottle for my Sister, and I have another from my dearest M<sup>rs</sup> Chetwood. Other little odds and ends may accompany these, if I can but find a conveyance, but that is the difficulty. . . .

20<sup>th</sup> [December]

" Our Play was very amusing. The House is large and handsome, but badly lighted, which is the fashion at all the Russian theatres. M. Possnicoff and Count Santi<sup>1</sup> were our Beaus. The latter is the most extraordinary likeness to Rogers Aldworth, not in appearance but in every one of his little ways. Only his language is french instead of English I cou'd almost fancy he was actually R. Aldworth who spoke.<sup>2</sup> He sometimes forgets everything and everybody for half an hour at a time, and suddenly wakes from a reverie, scolding one for not understanding his thoughts during his absent fit. He has already told me that what I say'd was all nonsense, and almost pinch'd me because I did not clearly comprehend something he say'd. His character is uncommonly amiable. He is domesticated in a family at once, or else gives up their acquaintance : never dances, and everybody dreads him as a partner at Cards ; but he is a steady and an active friend, visits sick people as if he was a Physician, and is universally beloved. . . .

The Princess has presented me with another Shawl, a splendid one, a sort of deep Scarlet. Shawls are so much in fashion here that one is absolutely nothing without one, and the greater the number you possess *the more you are respected*. I have six. To

<sup>1</sup> Count Leon Santy married Anna, daughter of M. Alexander Narbekov by his wife, *née* Countess Pelagia Woronzow, who was an aunt of Princess Daschkaw. Their daughter, Alexandra, married Prince Alexander Mavrocordato, ex-Hospodar of Moldavia.

<sup>2</sup> Rogers Aldworth was a first cousin of Martha Wilmot's mother. He was the youngest son of Boyle Aldworth of Newmarket, County Cork, by his second wife, Martha, daughter of Christopher Rogers of Lota, County Cork. His uncle, St. Leger Aldworth, succeeded to the Viscounty of Doneraile in 1767 ; he married the Hon. Elizabeth St. Leger, who is celebrated as the only woman ever admitted to membership of the Masonic Order, having previously hidden in her father's house to witness the ceremonies. His son, Richard Aldworth, married Lady Letitia Hare, eldest daughter of Richard, Viscount Ennismore and granddaughter of William, 1st Earl of Listowel.

say truth they are a very comfortable fashion. Your Shawl shou'd be three times as large as yourself, twisted round one arm for Drapery and the other end on the ground. The Princess is preparing a Bracelet for me, her own picture ; it is to be worn on the left arm, and is literally call'd a Sentiment. (Do not suppose I have lost my senses because I continue my plan of writing all sorts of little nothings as they occur ; by the by I think such trifles often let one into the manners of a place more than graver subjects, and I shall be so delighted if I can make you sensible of the manners and customs here.) You may be sure this same Bracelet is a more agreeable testimony of Princess Daschkaw's affection than anything else cou'd be.

22<sup>d</sup> [December]

" I am just returned from a dinner at Prince Gallitzen's. He was formerly grand Chamberlain to Empress Katherine, and now wears as a token a large Key of diamonds.<sup>1</sup> Diamond epaulets and sword knots are as plenty as Mushrooms after a summer's shower ; and as for Stars of diamonds so large that your hand cou'd not cover one of them, they dazzle one's eyes in every company. But the most remarkable person in the room (or rather Hall of entertainment large enough for our House to stand in) was Count Alexis Orloff.<sup>2</sup> You know what Share he

<sup>1</sup> Prince Alexander Galitzen (1723-1807), formerly Vice-Chancellor under Peter III and Catherine II. Son of General Prince Michael Galitzen and his wife, *née* Mlle. Tatiana Narishkin. As a politician he was a mediocrity and exercised little influence in affairs, and in 1775 he was consequently transferred to the more suitable post of Grand Chamberlain. Noted for his magnificent collection of pictures and sculptures. He died unmarried, but lived for many years with a beautiful Hungarian, Baroness Klüpfel, who bore him several children.

<sup>2</sup> Count Alexis Orloff-Chesmensky (1735-1807), Russian soldier and sportsman. Son of M. Gregory Orloff, Governor of Novgorod. Was by far the ablest member of the distinguished Orloff family. First came into prominence during the Revolution of 1762, when he conveyed the deposed Czar Peter III to the castle of Ropscha, near St Petersburg, and there murdered him, being assisted in the deed by Prince Theodor Bariatinsky and several other officers. A letter written by him to the Empress Catherine II immediately afterwards, in which he entreated for mercy, was discovered by Paul I on his accession, and in the latter's eyes it effectually cleared the Empress of the suspicion of being privy to his father's death. Orloff was saved from punishment by Catherine's *post facto* acquiescence in the crime, and the fact that his elder brother Gregory was her acknowledged lover. Like his brother he was noted for extraordinary physical strength. In 1770 he led a Russian

had in the revolution. He is a monster in appearance and his strength is almost beyond belief—he made me shudder. He wears the Empress's picture set in diamonds of enormous size, and instead of a Glass, 'tis a single diamond which covers the portrait. His Daughter is a Charming elegant young Woman. We are to be at a Ball there on Thursday. I am sick of the Diamonds, pearls and embroidery that I see on all the grantees, but 'tis very splendid. 'tis also dull, for every Man of them is 60, 70 or 80. I was plac'd at dinner between Princess Dolgorouky and Prince Daschkaw. The former is a pleasing young Woman who was all politeness to me.<sup>1</sup> Prince D. wou'd be a favorite with me any where ; his Character is Sterling and his conversation very agreeable. In Russia he is perhaps one of the most respectable Men to be met with ; and the education and principles which he received Early in life have laid a foundation of Character which example has not contaminated, and which is I believe the lot of but a few. We were almost 4 hours at dinner. We had Asparagus, Grapes, and everything you can think of and that in weather which is now 26 degrees of cold. Only conceive to what perfection the art of Coaxing nature into a forgetfulness of times and seasons is brought in this luxurious place. The Grapes are literally as large as Pigeons' Eggs. . . .

*Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> [December]*

“ What a happiness I have this moment experienc'd. My ever precious darling father's letter with a delightful enclosure from my ever dearest Harriet reach'd me to day just as we were stepping into the carriage to dine at Count Ostrowman's. To read them comfortably was impossible, so I just gratified my heart with a

squadron against the Sultan and annihilated the whole Turkish fleet off Chesmé in an engagement which led to the conquest of the Greek archipelago. For this achievement he received the title *Chesmensky*. Some years later he retired and settled in Moscow, where he devoted himself to horse-breeding and succeeded in producing the finest race of horses then known by crossing Arab with Frisian and English studs. He married Eudoxie, daughter of M. Nicholas Lopukhin, by whom he had one daughter, Anne.

<sup>1</sup> Princess Varvara Dolgorouky (1778-1828), daughter of Prince Youri Dolgorouky and his wife, *née* Countess Catherine Buturlin. Her uncle, Count Peter Buturlin, married Princess Daschkaw's younger sister, formerly Countess Maria Woronzow. Princess Dolgorouky later married Prince Alexis Gortchakoff.

certainty of your being well and put them as a dear and precious Talisman into my pocket. I give you my word I was so agreeable at dinner that I flatter myself my neighbour Prince Daschkaw was contented with himself, for of course he thought his conversation inspired me. But what will divert you all is that a very charming Young Mad<sup>lle</sup> Litzen took a ring off her finger and intreated I would accept it as an emblem of her—what shall I say?—her friendship Elect.

Instantly on my return home I flew to indulge myself in the perusal of my most Welcome Letters. But gracious Heaven ! What a shock the death of that dear good amiable excellent Woman M<sup>rs</sup> Bury gives me. What a Vapour is life. My very soul shrinks at the idea of it. I hope in every letter you will tell me about the family—if sorrow and heart felt sympathy can gratify their feelings, I offer both from my very Soul.

Adieu my ever beloved Mother.

#### TO HER FATHER

MOSCOW. *Jany 2<sup>d</sup>, 1804*

“ A young Scotch Man of the name of M<sup>c</sup>Kenzie, with whom I have got acquainted since our arrival here has kindly offered to convey to England any letters &c. &c. with which I will intrust him. He is as a Military Man oblig’d to return, and I cou’d not help confessing, even to him, that as a Britain I thought Home was at this eventful period the true and advantageous place for all my Country men to assemble and support their rights much as I regretted his departure. He is an honest excellent creature, but at a distance from old England such as this there is no expressing the pleasure that a country man of any merit conveys to our feelings. He is to be accompanied by another young man of the name of Cornwell. Our friend M<sup>r</sup> Harris is to remain, I believe, for a time as he has been frozen in his foot which is not a trifle I can tell you, tho’ he is now almost recover’d. If M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Kenzie conveys my packets to London, ’tis all I can expect. After that the Lord prosper them and speed them to little Erin.

I read to the Princess part of your dear affectionate letter which enchanted her. She says she means to enter the lists against you and my Mother to prove that I am her daughter not yours, and

has sketched a ridiculous process to reclaim her rights which she declares you have usurp'd *ever since her visit to Ireland*, but which she will place before the courts of Justice. She desires me to give proper notice in her name. I promis'd. So here I proclaim the impending tryal. God save the King!!! Do you suppose these flattering compliments from so Celebrated a Woman make me vain? No my dearest father, nor cou'd all the courts in all the Countrys in Christendom detach my heart and soul from their accustom'd resting place—Home. But in reading these little instances of her fondness for me, I know you will feel still more happiness than I do in writing them. My thoughts are so constantly fix'd on the situation of our country that few things make me forget it for half an hour at a time. When one is on the spot one knows what passes, but so far away imagination has such opportunity for creating good and bad that it is a constant employment. . . . Every one tells me the Princess does things on my account she was not known to do for years past. For example, she goes to the public Balls with us, and her eyes follow me when I dance with such interest and affection as you wou'd scarcely credit. . . .

I told all our proceedings in my last letter to my Mother. Since that we have been at Count Orloff's ball which was superb, and what pleased me more, it was in the Russian fashion. We began with a country dance (that is after the Polonaise which is always danc'd first, or rather walk'd). There were five country dances, and between each Countess Orloff danc'd figure dances which exceeded everything I ever beheld (even in pictures) for Grace Elegance and beauty.<sup>1</sup> Lady Hamilton's attitudes are

<sup>1</sup> Countess Anne Orloff-Chesmensky (1785-1848), only daughter of Count Alexis Orloff-Chesmensky and his wife, *née* Mlle. Eudoxie Lopukhin. Noted for her Amazonian beauty and strength. In spite of numerous suitors for her hand she never married, but after her father's death in 1807 she lived in rigid seclusion and became deeply religious. She then fell completely under the influence of her confessor, the celebrated archimandrite Photius, and spent much of her life in fasting and prayer near his monastery of Yourieff, which she richly endowed at her own expense. Her remains lie beside those of the archimandrite in this monastery.

Alexander Herzen has left a vivid description of her in his *Memoirs*: "As a boy I saw her once or twice, then I saw her in 1841 at Novgorod", he wrote; "she was living near the Yourieff Monastery. Her whole life was one prolonged sorrowful penitence for a crime she had not committed, one prayer for the remission of her father's sins, one act of



COUNT ALEXIS ORLOFF  
*From a miniature formerly in the possession of the  
Grand Duke Mikhailovich*



COUNTESS ANNE ORLOFF  
*From a portrait formerly in the Imperial  
Foreign Office in Moscow*



absolutely Vulgar compar'd to the Sylph like beauty of Countess Orloff—'tis a sin they are not preserv'd on Canvass—and added to this such artless sweetness I never beheld before. The Shawl dance in every movement was a picture of the most exquisite beauty. . . . You generally like to hear the names of the people's partners. Well then, mine were M. de Navassiloff in embroider'd Coat and lily white silk stockings to whom the Princess presented me at the Assembly. It was my first dance, and you must know the English are rather thought awkward. However I acquitted myself so much to the satisfaction of my well powder'd Hero, than on our return to the Princess he very formally thank'd me for the happiness he had experienced, and with the most profound gravity beg'd to know whether I was equally pleas'd with him? I thought I should have expired for want of laughing. However I beg'd the Princess to assure him I was perfectly contented with his performance, that he danc'd divinely, and so to save further explanations I cram'd him Grapes which my amiable friend M. Posnicoff had just presented to me. After this 'tis no wonder he was my devoted Slave at Count Orloff's. My second partner was M. de Casloff, a notorious dancer; 3<sup>rd</sup> Prince Daschkaw; 4<sup>th</sup> an unknown whose dress alone might be sold at an auction for 10,000 roubles; the 5<sup>th</sup> M. Gleboff another nephew of the princess's.

atonement for them. . . . Her palace grew emptier and emptier, and at last sank into complete silence; neither the clatter of old-fashioned goblets nor the choruses of singers were heard in it, and no one cared about the cherished racehorses. Only the black figures of bearded monks moved gloomily about the garden avenues and looked at the fountains, as though Count Alexis's funeral were not yet over—and, indeed, the prayer for the repose of his soul still went on. In the drawing-room, where she had spun and twirled in the gipsy dance in her girlish purity . . . and where her terrible father had gazed at her with tears in his eyes, the bigoted fanatic Photius sat now uttering incoherent speeches, and bringing even greater horror into her crushed soul; the daughter of the haughty conqueror of Chesmé meekly listened to his sinister words, carefully covering his feet with a shawl. . . . The immense estates, the stud farms, all went to adorn the Yourieff Monastery; thither she transferred too her father's coffin; there in a special vault a lamp for ever burned and a prayer was muttered over him; there her own sarcophagus, still empty when I saw it, was prepared. In the church twilight the wealth of the Orloff's transformed into rubies, pearls and emeralds, glitters mournfully in the settings of icons and the caps of archimandrites. With them the luckless daughter tried to bribe the Heavenly Judge. The Empress Catherine II had robbed the monasteries of their estates and distributed them among the Orloffs and her other lovers. What a nemesis!" (*My Past and Thoughts*, VI, 181-2, Eng. trans., London, 1927.)



At supper the Ladies sit at one side of the table and the gentlemen at the other. Opposite to me were Prince Daschkaw and Mr McKenzie. We were excessively merry and agreeable. During supper a young girl, a Slave (Heaven forgive the truth), play'd on a Guitar, and accompanied it with her voice. She sung one of the national songs which are very peculiar. As I was not near the Princess (for whom she sung) she sent her to me to sing the song a second time with all its pantomime graces. I was delighted with her. A national Harp was afterwards play'd on and accompanied by several Voices. A Gun was fir'd, or something which had exactly that effect, military music sounded, Silence proclaim'd, and Princess Daschkaw's health was toasted round by every creature as the Ball was in compliment to her. A second signal was given and Count Orloff's health was drunk. At the 3<sup>d</sup> we rose from the table. He walk'd a Polonaise with the Princess, & we again began to dance. The same young girl was call'd in and danced a national dance for us accompanied by her own Voice. The custom amongst the Peasantry is to sing a romance and move the arms &c. &c. according to the sentiments they express. 'Tis excessively amusing and unique. As soon as the Princess went away, Count Orloff fairly and squarely order'd every one to go home and sleep, and so ended the entertainment. Princess Dolgorouky and my friend Mad<sup>le</sup> Litzen were there. To the latter I presented a pearl ring in return for the *gage d'amitié* with which she graced the forefinger of my left hand the last day I wrote to my Mother.

Yesterday we went to Church. The Music was heavenly, truly so. Afterwards we visited the Hospodar, Prince Mavrocordat, and his Lady.

I must mention one Custom here which I own Shocks me. A fortnight ago a Mourning Card was presented to the Princess in common with all the Nobility of the town—a death's head, Cross Bones and other hideous Emblems of Mortality ornamented the outside border ; in the center was written that M. de Nebalsin had died that morning &c. &c. The very next day half Moscow, men and women, assembled at the unfortunate Madame Nebalsin's house ; and she (scarcely conscious of her own existence from sincere anguish) was oblig'd to endure from 12 in the morning till 10 in the evening the looks and conversation of every one

who chose to go to her house and stare at her. You may be sure I was so shock'd and astonish'd that I made every enquiry *why* she submitted to so unfeeling a practise, but I was told that, had she omitted to send the cards I mention or to receive the visits, she wou'd have excited such a host of enemys that the tongue of Scandal could never be silenced—she wou'd have been accus'd of indifference and disrespect to her husband's memory and no creature wou'd have believ'd her sorrow genuine or have visited her in future. In a few days I, a total stranger, accompanied the Princess to her House, and found her in what may well be call'd the Pomp of woe. She lay on a Sopha ; lights shaded, Gloom visible, every Visitor in deep mourning, whispering conversation &c. &c. When I approach'd with Princess Daschkaw she kiss'd me and regretted that her unfortunate situation must deprive her of the power of entertaining me &c. &c. listen'd to indifferent conversation, and even join'd in it. Such a Scene I never before witness'd. After this you may suppose her sorrow affected—but, no. She has every reason to regret her husband, is a woman of great Sensibility and good understanding, adored her husband and was really happy with him. A fortnight has pass'd, and she now begins to prove how deeply She feels. Far from receiving consolation, She more and more deplores his loss, and has at times fits of agony which she cannot controul ; and which she is oblig'd by that detested unfeeling fashion to exhibit to every eye that curiosity induces to obtrude upon the sacredness of sorrow.<sup>1</sup>

Another custom, but of a more agreeable nature, I experienc'd this morning. Whenever a person quits one House to go to another all the friends and even acquaintances may and generally do send some useful present, a piece of furniture, food, anything you please, Diamonds for example—but whatever is the value of

<sup>1</sup> Eudoxie Nebalsin (b. 1762), widow of M. Basil Nebalsin. Noted for her originality and outspokenness. Appears under the name of "Maria Dmitrievna" in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. "Maria Dmitrievna—nick-named the 'Dreadful Dragon'—had neither fortune nor title, but she was strictly honest and frank, and her manners were natural and unaffected. She was known to the imperial family, and the best society of both capitals was to be seen at her house. People might laugh in their sleeves at her free and easy ways and tell wonderful stories of her eccentricities ; she was feared and respected all the same" (*War and Peace*, Chap. VIII). She was on intimate terms with Count Rostoptchin, who was probably her lover. See below, p. 105, note 3.

the present, 'tis a custom for ages past to call it by the name of Bread and Salt, emblems of Hospitality. Now you must know Doc<sup>r</sup> Halliday with whom I travell'd from St Petersburg to Moscow is in the very act of getting into a new habitation. He was paying us a visit this morning and happen'd to mention the circumstance. The Princess who delights in the idea of my being a *Good Russian* told him she knew Miss Wilmot had (according to the national custom) prepared some Bread and Salt for M<sup>rs</sup> Haliday and requested She wou'd send for it in half an hour. Accordingly when her porters arrived, a very elegant Table with a marble top was ready to be sent and a note for M<sup>rs</sup> H. written in Russ. Here it goes in English. ' I send you to greet your new Establishment the *Bread and Salt*.'

Doc<sup>r</sup> H. is to give an English House warming, a Ball.

3<sup>d</sup> [*January*]

" Yesterday Prince Daschkaw received a most flattering proof of the respect and affection of all the Nobles of Moscow. You must know, tho' the Government of Russia is monarchical, yet there is one exception in the nobles of this district. They elect a grand Marshal who governs the affairs belonging to all the district which is immense and comprehends I don't know how many petty Governments, each of which elects its representative &c. &c. Prince D. had been chosen three years ago with universal approbation. Yesterday the period of his power expir'd ; a new choice was to be made, all the Grandees were assembled in the great Hall, the oath was administer'd, the Prince going to retire, when with one voice and more than one eye moisten'd with tears of unfeign'd love and approbation, they intreated him once more to accept an office which he had fill'd with so much honour and nobleness of mind. He really is a noble minded creature as ever existed, and with that possesses all the tenderness that perhaps belongs to a great character. I have seen him affected even to tears at Music which was more than usually pathetic ; and tho' he is as brave, nay proudly so, as Man can be yet he never was known to utter a word that could discountenance or injure human being.

I don't know what to think of Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Kenzie who I have not seen since I began this letter, so I will send it according to the usual plan—and six little billet Doux with a few &c. &c. must remain for the Scotch Hero. So adieu my dearest Father.

To MRS. ROBERT WILMOT <sup>1</sup>

MOSCOW Jan<sup>ry</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 1804

" . . . We have been leading a very dissipated life. Balls without end ; Dinners that end after *four hours* uninterrupted Cramming of every delicacy that Nature and Art can procure—Grapes freshly gather'd, Pine apples ditto, asparagus ditto, besides fruit preserved with such care that there is a Stout battle between Nature and the Cook for which is genuine, Peach, plumb, &c &c. &c. I forgot to mention Oranges which are this moment clustering on thousands of Orange trees in different parts of Moscow. Roses too are blooming in the midst of the sharpest degrees of cold ; and even I have in my room this moment Hyacinths of such beauty and fragrance as is really astonishing. 'tis only a proof however that things are valued according to the difficulty of procuring them and not their intrinsic merit, for (they say) where such things are to be procur'd with little or no trouble that little is thought too much, while on the contrary they toil and moil here and at length laugh at all difficultys which oppose them. As a national trait I am told there is a Proverb, to express the folly of supposing any thing impossible ; and it is very true that as the whim of the Master is the Law of the Slave, the latter does not know (to all appearance at least) what inclination means, but does everything he is desired whether he does it well or ill. Nature has given them uncommon quickness, but perhaps 'tis to the caprice of their Masters they owe their versatility of genius. But the Masters are shallow shallow pated animals as ever encumber'd the earth, poor paultry Dogs, Cerberus's, each possess'd of three tongues at least (but much more frequently of five) with which they lick each other from morning till night and Backbite the absent. I am well flatter'd so I may speak. A few evenings ago a Countess lord knows what dress'd in Diamonds came to pay a Visit. The Princess and I were alone. At first a slight salute was all that pass'd. After some time, while she was in the middle of an harrangue to which I must say the Princess did not pay much attention, she remark'd that princess Daschkaw

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. John Chetwood of Glanmire, County Cork. She married Martha's brother Robert Wilmot, Deputy Recorder of Cork.

took my hand affectionately in hers. I saw the thought which darted like lightening into her mind, that the best court she cou'd pay would be to praise me ; so without more ado she was seiz'd with a sudden *Colic* of admiration and exclaim'd in Russ, ' How beautiful she is ! ' The princess, who from some infatuation actually thinks me handsome, became much more attentive and I shou'd not be surprised if in the next interview the Diamond Countess was to ask and obtain some thousands of Roubles without interest. Does this give you any idea of our progress in refinement ? If not, what shall I say ?

After a dinner of parade we went a few evenings ago to visit the Widow Nebalsin, who I mention'd in a former letter. She was more melancholy and low spirited than usual and I found afterwards the reason was that she that day pay'd off the Priest who for 40 days had come regularly to read prayers in the room where her husband died. Her mourning Couch and Circular Apartment with shaded lights is still the rendez-vous of all that is Gay and tonish in Moscow, and yet that she suffers unaffected anguish is as sure as fate—she is to visit us at Troitska.

The Princess has a plan of visiting her Estate in Poland this summer which charms me, tho' it will take me 8 or 900 versts farther from you all and the chance of letters, but it will be a very interesting excursion and I sincerely hope nothing may prevent its taking place. And now tell the Girls, who will kill me if I don't speak out, that I have got *three* declar'd Lovers besides 20 or 30 Shooterers. The first is the grand Chamberlain with his tremendous Key of Diamonds. What if he is 80 years of age ! That's a trifle. He never was married. But if truth must come to light in a journey to England, a beautiful Albion captivated him, accompanied him back to Russia, and tho' they never married, Her Death chang'd the frail but affectionate fair one into a little Goddess who he mourns to this hour.<sup>1</sup> Her son (a Russian custom) bore the name of Litzen, that is his father's name without the first syllable. The grand Chamberlain is Prince Gallitzen, and 'tis his Grand daughter whose mother was a Princess that is my Crony and gives me rings for my fingers. She is really pleasing and is to have a tremendous fortune ; she lives

<sup>1</sup> Prince Galitzen's mistress was Baroness Klüpfel, a Hungarian, not an English woman. See above, p. 67, note 1.

in the House of her Grandfather but does not call him by that name. But to return to my story. Prince Gallitzen has a passion for everything English and particularly English fair ones. He is become my Slave and pays me compliments on my dress, my manners and that first of accomplishments, my Dancing.

Last Wednesday at the Assembly my cambrick Muslin Gown with the thin work'd border well known on the banks of the Lee excited a general sensation, and its simplicity and beauty was echoed by people tottering under the weight of Diamonds and Pearls. I have latterly been dress'd in very pretty Crape dresses, and yet till that Evening my taste and judgment pass'd unnotic'd. But a very elegant necklace of Pearl, four rows and an opal set in Diamonds, shone resplendent on my neck—both a gallantry of the Princess's who seems to know no pleasure [but that] of procuring me whatever she thinks useful and pretty or amusing.

My second swain is a M. Erupkin uncle to princess Daschkaw. He is 84, and signaliz'd himself at the time of the dreadful plague at Moscow (when an insurrection was rais'd and a Metropolitan so barbarously murder'd) by exposing his life to the fury of the people and at length calming them.<sup>1</sup> He is a most respectable man, and I am half inclin'd to favour his suit ; but unhappily the Governor of Moscow, a fat good humour'd Man in scarlet uniform disputes the Prize with him, and as neither party speaks any other language but Russ I am obliged to defer my final decision till I learn enough of the lines myself to understand their respective merits.

We have lately lost from our Society's the very flower of Moscow—three Englishmen, M<sup>r</sup> Harris, son to Lord Malmesbury whose first interview with me at Troitska I described to my Mother ; his cousin M<sup>r</sup> Cornwall, gentle and gentlemanlike ; and M<sup>r</sup> McKenzie a Scotch Man who does not want for understanding but wants a polite education. They were greatly courted here and made a part of everything gay and brilliant. The last day I spent in their company was at a very agreeable Sledging

<sup>1</sup> Peter Eropkin (1724-1805), Russian general, senator and Privy Councillor. Son of General Dmitri Eropkin. Formerly Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Moscow. In 1771 he was entrusted by the Empress Catherine II with the task of organising relief works during the plague in Moscow, and was exposed to great danger and difficulties throughout this period. He married Elizabeth, daughter of M. Michael Leontieff and aunt of Prince Michael Daschkaw, Princess Daschkaw's late husband.

took my hand affectionately in hers. I saw the thought which darted like lightening into her mind, that the best court she cou'd pay would be to praise me ; so without more ado she was seiz'd with a sudden *Colic* of admiration and exclaim'd in Russ, ' How beautiful she is ! ' The princess, who from some infatuation actually thinks me handsome, became much more attentive and I shou'd not be surprised if in the next interview the Diamond Countess was to ask and obtain some thousands of Roubles without interest. Does this give you any idea of our progress in refinement ? If not, what shall I say ?

After a dinner of parade we went a few evenings ago to visit the Widow Nebalsin, who I mention'd in a former letter. She was more melancholy and low spirited than usual and I found afterwards the reason was that she that day pay'd off the Priest who for 40 days had come regularly to read prayers in the room where her husband died. Her mourning Couch and Circular Apartment with shaded lights is still the rendez-vous of all that is Gay and tonish in Moscow, and yet that she suffers unaffected anguish is as sure as fate—she is to visit us at Troitska.

The Princess has a plan of visiting her Estate in Poland this summer which charms me, tho' it will take me 8 or 900 versts farther from you all and the chance of letters, but it will be a very interesting excursion and I sincerely hope nothing may prevent its taking place. And now tell the Girls, who will kill me if I don't speak out, that I have got *three* declar'd Lovers besides 20 or 30 Shooterers. The first is the grand Chamberlain with his tremendous Key of Diamonds. What if he is 80 years of age ! That's a trifle. He never was married. But if truth must come to light in a journey to England, a beautiful Albion captivated him, accompanied him back to Russia, and tho' they never married, Her Death chang'd the frail but affectionate fair one into a little Goddess who he mourns to this hour.<sup>1</sup> Her son (a Russian custom) bore the name of Litzen, that is his father's name without the first syllable. The grand Chamberlain is Prince Gallitzen, and 'tis his Grand daughter whose mother was a Princess that is my Crony and gives me rings for my fingers. She is really pleasing and is to have a tremendous fortune ; she lives

<sup>1</sup> Prince Galitzen's mistress was Baroness Klüpfel, a Hungarian, not an English woman. See above, p. 67, note 1.

in the House of her Grandfather but does not call him by that name. But to return to my story. Prince Gallitzen has a passion for everything English and particularly English fair ones. He is become my Slave and pays me compliments on my dress, my manners and that first of accomplishments, my Dancing.

Last Wednesday at the Assembly my cambrick Muslin Gown with the thin work'd border well known on the banks of the Lee excited a general sensation, and its simplicity and beauty was echoed by people tottering under the weight of Diamonds and Pearls. I have latterly been dress'd in very pretty Crape dresses, and yet till that Evening my taste and judgment pass'd unnotic'd. But a very elegant necklace of Pearl, four rows and an opal set in Diamonds, shone resplendent on my neck—both a gallantry of the Princess's who seems to know no pleasure [but that] of procuring me whatever she thinks useful and pretty or amusing.

My second swain is a M. Erupkin uncle to princess Daschkaw. He is 84, and signaliz'd himself at the time of the dreadful plague at Moscow (when an insurrection was rais'd and a Metropolitan so barbarously murder'd) by exposing his life to the fury of the people and at length calming them.<sup>1</sup> He is a most respectable man, and I am half inclin'd to favour his suit ; but unhappily the Governor of Moscow, a fat good humour'd Man in scarlet uniform disputes the Prize with him, and as neither party speaks any other language but Russ I am obliged to defer my final decision till I learn enough of the lines myself to understand their respective merits.

We have lately lost from our Society's the very flower of Moscow—three Englishmen, M<sup>r</sup> Harris, son to Lord Malmesbury whose first interview with me at Troitska I described to my Mother ; his cousin M<sup>r</sup> Cornwall, gentle and gentlemanlike ; and M<sup>r</sup> McKenzie a Scotch Man who does not want for understanding but wants a polite education. They were greatly courted here and made a part of everything gay and brilliant. The last day I spent in their company was at a very agreeable Sledging

<sup>1</sup> Peter Eropkin (1724-1805), Russian general, senator and Privy Councillor. Son of General Dmitri Eropkin. Formerly Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Moscow. In 1771 he was entrusted by the Empress Catherine II with the task of organising relief works during the plague in Moscow, and was exposed to great danger and difficulties throughout this period. He married Elizabeth, daughter of M. Michael Leontieff and aunt of Prince Michael Daschkaw, Princess Daschkaw's late husband.



party which was given nominally for the Princess but really for me. A certain Mons<sup>r</sup> and M<sup>dm</sup> Kumberline invited a tremendous Party to assemble at their House on the 20<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>ry</sup> 1804 at the hour of twelve. We were a few minutes later and cou'd scarcely gain admittance for the number of Traineaus that were in the court and afterwards for the number of Guests that were in the apartments. Soon after Chocolet and Cakes were handed round and then Breakfast open'd on our astonish'd optics in another room which consisted of hot and Cold soups (very common and detestably bad in my opinion), meat, fish, fowls, Ices, fruits &c. &c. &c. The desert was in another room, dry'd fruits, Cakes, and *eau de vie*. At length forty Traineaus, each drawn by six Horses at least, quitted the House. In each Traineau were four people, two Ladys and two Gentlemen attended by two footmen and two or three Postillions &c. &c. &c. The *Coup d'oeuil* was superb. Our party was Anna Petrovna and me, our Beaus, a M<sup>r</sup> Wilson and M. de Navaliskoff, but M<sup>r</sup> McKenzie vow'd he wou'd be of our party and so jump'd into the Carriage. We drove like lightning round the Town and through the Town, each animating his Coachman to unheard of exertions to pass the Traineau which was before him; and when any little accident oblig'd one to stop and repair the damage Joy and triumph were loudly shouted from all the Line. We were dress'd in all our best array; but don't figure to yourself fur Caps &c.—not at all—white Satin on some, pink on others &c. &c. black beaver on a few and amongst that number was your humble servant. Shawls and Pelises protected us from the Cold which however was not very intense that day. After parading with indefatigable speed for two hours and a half, we return'd to M. Kumberline's, arrang'd our Dresses as well as we cou'd, drank tea, and then danc'd to conclude the Evening which was really concluded by a splendid supper to which We could not stay, all partys being a little tired and Princess Daschkaw not well. She was not amongst the fly aways but return'd for the Ball. Upon the whole it was remarkably pleasant, and a sort of amusement which is only to be met with in northern regions.

At a Ball at Count Orloff's I saw, as well as heard, the Horn Music. 40 Horns compleat the piece of Music. Of course 40 people are necessary, each Horn being only one note. Judge the

value of Men in this Country when such a number are kept in a private family for that express purpose. But perhaps I have not given you the History of the Ball at Count Orloff's. I'll look in my Journal (for I do keep a journal such as it is, my darling Eliza) and if I have not already described it I will to my Mother to whom I shall write immediately. . . .

I give you twenty guesses to find out what I am going to do. You cannot. Well I'll tell you. To sit for *four* Pictures. Only think, the Princess will have a Miniature of this ridiculous face of mine in a snuff Box. A second Miniature she intends to send to my Mother. Is not that amiable and affectionate? The two others are to be large painted in Oyles. I am Confounded beyond measure—and the notion of so many shadows appearing in the noon day—but what can I do? I have already sat twice, and to be sure it would make any creature laugh to hear the reiterated assurances of the Princess to the Painter that I am absolutely Divine and that he must make a *perfect* picture. The poor Man looks at the Materials, does not dare to smile, and promises to do his best. . . .

I have sent a little parcel of attar of roses and odds and ends to London with letters to you all, and some seeds for my darling Mrs Chetwood. I trust such as it is it may arrive safe.

Adieu, my darling Dear Eliza.

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Sat. 10<sup>th</sup> [February]*

"The Princess has begun to write her life. Her motive for so doing is friendship to me, as she says she will give me the manuscript & liberty to publish it. It will probably be a most interesting work.

*Eve<sup>d</sup>*

"The ring which she put on my finger magnificent. Every moment marks her affection.

*To HER MOTHER*

MOSCOW 12<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>r</sup> 1804

"... The cares, the affection, the tenderness, the friendship of Princess Daschkaw are really and truly boundless. I don't know how to express it. 'Tis almost what she feels for her own children

with the idea of my being far from home superadded. It occupies more than half her life and literally animates every action. Every day and every minute seem to add to this affection ; or, as she says herself, 'tis a feel she has *always* had, for no power can persuaid her that it was only last August she saw me for the first time. This foolish face of mine is already plac'd on Canvass ; a large Portrait is finish'd, but not like in my opinion. However a Miniature painter is now busy and the Princess intends to send you a specimen of his performance ; she enjoys the idea of doing so with the most affectionate interest and pleasure. But the picture which I believe will be the best is a large one in Oyls which I sat for the outline yesterday. 'Tis an Italian artist call'd Signore Vigoni—he paints in a superior stile, takes strong likenesses, and is so handsome himself and so agreeable (speaks french) that one is perforce more pleased in his company than with a person one cannot understand. Shou'd it turn out a faithful resemblance, the Miniature for you shall be copied from it instead of the one he is doing which does not promise much.

We are still leading a gay life, that is going out every day. Yesterday we went at two o'clock to Count Ostrowman's to celebrate the saint after whom his sister in law is call'd, or rather her tutelar saint thro' life. Her name is Ann, and as there is an order of Saint Ann (a scarlet ribband) all those who have higher orders chang'd them and wore red to please the fair saint whose blushing honours were visible on almost every man in the room. None of your youthful Plebeians for us—no, no—70 and 80 years of age, and 70 and 80 thousand pounds per annum were the votarys who did homage at her shrine. Immediately on entering we were led to a table where what is call'd a Breakfast was display'd—that is, little odds and ends of dry'd fish, of Caviar, of Cheese, Bread &c. &c. and *eau de vie* (whisky) were presented to us to give us an appetite for dinner which was announc'd almost immediately. We assembled in the Hall which I think I have already described to you, surrounded by a sort of Gallery which was fill'd with Men, Women, children, Dwarfs, Fools, and enrag'd Musicians who sang and play'd with such powerful effect as to deafen those whom Heaven had spar'd. That was not the case of my neighbour on the right hand a Prince Pontrominskoff who was so insensible of the harmony that he *flirted* with me between every

dish, and we had as animated conversation as 'tis possible to conceive under such circumstances. In the midst of a most pathetic address which he pour'd into my right ear, and which struggled with the music for admission, a Trumpet sounded ' and blew a blast so loud and dread ' that every tongue was silenc'd and every figure and face round the table electrified into sudden demureness and attention. A chrystal vase fill'd with champagne was presented to the Master of the Castle. He stood up and quaff'd the sparkling draught to the health of the Lady of the feast. The Trumpet sounded a second tune, the Goblet was presented to Princess Daschkaw who went thro' the same ceremony. A third time the Trumpet sounded and a third person quaff'd from the same chrystal vase to the same toast. In short, the same ceremony was repeated for every individual, and as there were a party of 46 you may judge the time which all the pomp and parade took up. . . . The moment Princess Daschkaw had finish'd the rubber of Whist or Boston which she began before dinner we came away. It was still day light, and we pay'd an Evening visit to another Ann who had assembled a parcel of Anns to feast together in honour of their own names and their saint. . . .

Many a bad dinner have I made from the mere fatigue of being offer'd fifty or sixty different Dishes by servants who come one after the other and flourish ready carv'd fish, flesh, fowl, Vegetables, fruits, soups of fish &c. &c. before your eyes, wines, Liqueurs &c. &c. in their turn. Seriously the profusion is beyond anything I ever saw. Many a time have I wish'd the wasted food of their fatiguing feasts transported to little Erin, which too often wants what is here despis'd. The very poorest people here have resources and likewise abundance which our poor know nothing of, and the peasantry of this country really and truly enjoy not only the necessarys but the comforts of life to an astonishing degree. Had they a sense of cleanliness and coziness they seldom want the means of gratifying such feelings. Hospitality is here in perfection, but whether every honied expression be sincere or durable, or whether a sort of idle curiosity be their first spring of action, 'tis not for me to determine yet. M<sup>dm</sup> de Ribaupier, her daughter *Nasty*, and Katinka and the princess Turkistanoff are arrived to visit M<sup>dm</sup> de Nebalsin the widow. I was very glad to see my Petersbourg acquaintances who tell me

that all those I was known to during my stay here speak of me with Kindness. Sir John Warren, Mr Garlike, and the worthy Scotch Man Doc<sup>r</sup> Rogerson amongst others. I shou'd greatly like a trip to St Petersburg, but I fear the Princess has not the slightest notion of such a thing. It is possible we shall take a journey to Poland this summer, and spend two or three months at an estate of the Princess's. The idea of such a journey pleases me excessively. . . .

18<sup>th</sup> [February]

" 'Tis a week since I began this letter, and so much have I been taken up with one gayety or another that I absolutely have not time to write. Yesterday we dined at a Mr Kissiloff's where the only thing worth telling you about was a little Calmuck Boy from the confines of China. He was brought in together with a little circassian and an Indian to amuse the company, each dress'd according to the fashion of his country. The two latter were not very remarkable, but the little Chinese was critically like the figures on old Indian screnes, cups and saucers, fans &c. His little twinkling beads of eyes were uncommonly intelligent and his flat face when animated (which by the by it always was) had the expression of fearlessness and independence to the greatest degree I ever beheld. His dress was trowsers of white Indian calico, a Shawl serv'd for shirt waistcoat, and all the rest of his dress except a little spencer of scarlet casimere edg'd with silver spangles. His arms were quite bare and his movements excessively graceful. The three children danc'd together, and tho' only 5 or 6 years old He took the lead in the most decided manner, tho' the two others were 8 and 10 years of age. 'tis here quite the custom to bring in men, or women, or children, or fools, or anything that can amuse, to entertain the company. Whatever the tallent is, 'tis brought forward and *mauvaise honte* is absolutely unknown, or if felt 'tis banish'd as fast as possible as useless lumber. A [few?] days ago we din'd at a M. de Chasnicoff's, a real russ entertainment, that is, dishes dress'd in the russ fashion, music during dinner, and healths drank Standing. Since the hour I was born I never heard so melodious, so bewitching a voice as a young girl who sang—it was the most plaintive yet fine full ton'd voice that 'tis possible to conceive. I am seldom affected to tears by the power of Music alone without some Association,

but her voice alone singing the native songs of her country actually made me shed tears. . . .

To-day I have been sitting for my picture again with the handsome Italian. He is actually making me a *Venus de Medicis*. It would make any body but me laugh to see and hear the dear affectionate Princess, her comments &c. &c. &c. Between them they actually will make a pretty Picture, but as to likeness I fear that will be left out of the question. A flattering likeness I not only forgive but approve. However we shall see, and yours shall be the truest. Do you know the mornings we go to Sig<sup>r</sup> Vigoni's are quite pleasant ; and if I was not now and then petrified by the Princess desiring him to remark some perfection in my face I should regret the conclusion of the task, for on other subjects the conversation is extremely agreeable. I am to be in a fancy dress, and to have a sort of mantle of crimson. . . .

We have had a Masquerade here, but a miserable Affair. Not an individual has the slightest notion of supporting a character. They dress some in diamonds and very fine—a great Lord perhaps in a Peasant's costume and a great Lady ditto. One stalks as a Giant's Boot thro' the apartments, and another enacts a Windmill. A few Bats flap their heavy wings and squeak your name *en passant*, but as for the spirit of the Masquerade 'tis unknown. The best thing I saw there was my own little pretty *femme de Chambre* Sophia. I dress'd her out in every finery I could collect and she look'd uncommonly pretty. No doubt a Servant boy thought so too, for three times he ask'd her to dance and three times she refused because she had never even seen one danc'd. However, hearing her sister Abigals whispering scornfully that perhaps she did not know how to dance at all, when her Beau (most persevering !) return'd for the fourth time to dance the same dance, she triumphantly quitted her companions resolv'd to make them blush at their calumny. At length it came to her turn. The music was rather slow and graceful. But what was my dismay to see Sophia and her partner set out hand in hand full speed, and run from the top of the room to the bottom. There the wall stopt their flight. They therefore return'd, receiv'd a few pushes from those who pay'd some attention to the music or the figure, to both of which they shew'd the most mark'd contempt. At length when tired they stop'd, and I do not exaggerate when I say that

this moment she is so innocent she has not the slightest notion she danc'd differently from the other Ladys who danc'd there. We were dress'd in Black, but did not affect disguise except that a Mask or a Veil is necessary. We had both but took off the former very soon and did not stay late. Masters and servants &c. &c. were mingled pell mell It was a private entertainment at a M. Solticoff's. . . .

21<sup>st</sup> [February]

"I have been sitting again for my picture. It is growing so picturesque and bewitching that I am tempted to sing 'O says the little woman this is none of I'. The Princess is enchanted with it, and declares your miniature shall be just like it.

We were dancing at the Assembly till very late last night ; and to day we are going to dine with a Georgian Archbishop, a Prince and two Princesses from the same country.

To HER FATHER

MOSCOW 25<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>ry</sup>, 1804

"Every day gives me more and more to say of the dear Princess, and what I am going to mention deserves a letter to itself. Talking of politics the other day and of the Irish disturbances which oblig'd us to quit Home so suddenly, she say'd, 'I insist on your writing this to your father and mother. In the present state of the times, but should any thoughts of *Emigrating* occur to them, Russia is the natural place for them to resort to. I have a second House at Troitska and a Palace at Moscow, and while I have a House to shelter me or bread to share with those I already respect and value, 'tis from the bottom of my heart I offer both and my cordial friendship to everyone of your family.' And that she felt what she say'd is as sure as fate. Heaven forbid our little Erin shou'd ever put such noble offers to the test, but while they shew her style of Character they must raise her in your opinion. . . .

To HER FATHER

MOSCOW 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1804

"... You see my letters are still dated from Moscow, but I fancy we shall quit it very soon. The Carnival is to commence here in less than a week and to last an entire one during which time we are to dress as fine as Jack daws and jostle against each other

in genteel crowds from morning till night. At 12 o'clock on the last day of the festivity, when a more tremendous Assemblage and a merrier Ball than ever is to collect half the Town, the solemn sound of the great Cathedral Bell is to announce the Midnight hour and the commencement of the great Fast. At the sound those who are engaged in eating their last supper of substantial food drop their knives and forks. All are forsaken in a moment, and for six weeks not only meat is forbidden but also fish, butter, cream, even with tea and Coffee, and almost every description of nourishing food except Bread. Every one repairs to the confessionals, old sins are wip'd off, new ones, no doubt, are determined against, and every one is 'tis possible for their natures to be during the fast. We are making the best of our time before this terrible fast arrives. Every Evening there is a Ball, and sometimes *five* in the Evening. Yesterday we were at one, to day we shall grace another, Sunday a Masquerade, and every Tuesday the Assembly. . . .

I was a few days ago for the first time on the Mountains of Ice which you may have read of in the history of the amusements of St Petersburg. It was extremely amusing. We were mounted on a staircase of at least eighty feet, at the top of which we found a charming arbour ornamented with green branches of Fir, from that an Ally of Wood which was elevated to the summit of the height and descended gradually to the ground. It was perfectly smooth for Water had been thrown on it which froze instantly. Well let us mount once more into the Arbour and sit down in an Arm Chair with one companion. The Chair has Skates instead of feet. A man who is behind you pushes you. He is provided with Skates. He directs the chair, and there you are without the least possibility of stopping till you arrive at the end of your journey. I should think the sensation must resemble the flight of a Bird. I found it very agreeable, as you may believe when I went seven times. . . .

The spring is advancing fast, the days are considerably lengthen'd and we have brilliant sunshine for 8 hours. I have never experienced the slightest effect from the change of climate. Did you ever know such an impenetrable rock as I am? . . . I have begun to learn the Guitar. It is a Polonaise Guitar strung with catgut instead of wire like the English ones. I play two or three songs, and find it very difficult tho' it looks simple. . . .



*From HER JOURNAL**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> [March]*

"... We dined at Count Pushkin's,<sup>1</sup> & after dinner, Anna Petrovna & I, accompanied by Countess Katherine Pushkin & M<sup>lle</sup> Litzen drove to Pokrofsky and back again. The object of this excursion of pleasure during the Carnival is to exhibit all possible finery in equipage, dress, &c. &c. &c. The Merchants' Wives are particularly splendid. Headdresses of pearls & veils of muslin embroider'd with gold & with silver, or silk embroider'd with ditto, their pelises of gold silk lined with the most expensive furs, their faces painted red & white altogether give them a very shewy & handsome appearance. But their carriages are magnificent, and the Horses are the most beautiful spirited Creatures 'tis possible to conceive. There is the greatest possible emulation amongst them on this subject. Pokrofsky is a village & a very inconsiderable one, so that driving there is only agreeing on a *rendezvous* for the exhibition of Traineaus &c. &c. &c. &c. We saw & exchanged bows & smiles from our coach into the carriages of our neighbours. The charming Countess Orloff was the only Woman who drove, and she was her father's Charioteer, driving 4 in hand. The Carriage was preceded by two Horsemen in scarlet, a Postillion guided two horses & the Countess 4. The Carriage was a high light Phaeton like a shell & uncommonly pretty. Multitudes of people were there & the Police kept all in the best order. . . .

. . . . .

*Monday 19<sup>th</sup> [March]*

"This being the first day of the great fast, nothing but fish and vegetables is eat in the House except by the Princess who is weak & delicate & by me who dont much care about the matter. Fish is disguised in every possible manner, made into little patés, into soup &c. &c. &c. The Priest say'd a Mass here this Eve<sup>g</sup> & is to do so twice every day during the week. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Count Alexis Moussin-Pushkin (1744-1817), Russian antiquarian. Formerly Procurator of the General Synod. Possessed the most valuable private collection of books and mss. in Russia, including the celebrated Song of Igor which he discovered and published. Unfortunately almost the whole of his collection perished during the burning of Moscow in 1812.

*Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> [March]*

“Extremely cold & snow falling with a piercing wind which drifts the snow in every direction. Packing up for tomorrow’s journey to Troitska. The Princess Mavrocordat & M<sup>r</sup> Mouramzoff spent some time here, criticised my portraits &c. &c. The Princess D. was seiz’d with a very violent pain in her bowels soon after which continued for nearly seven hours. Good-natured Count Santi went twice to Prince Daschkaw’s who is also very unwell & then to D<sup>r</sup> Halliday who she allowed to see her after much persuasion ; she has taken a medicine & is asleep. She suffer’d dreadfully for several hours which went to my very heart.

*Sat. 24<sup>th</sup> [March]*

“The dear Princess is better to-day. Our journey is postponed till to-morrow. All the bells are ringing peals of joy for the anniversary of the Emperor’s accession to the throne & perhaps for their release from Paul’s tyranny.

Yesterday Anna Petrovna confess’d & rec<sup>d</sup> Absolution. To-day she rec<sup>d</sup> the Communion, & so did the Princess who was too ill yesterday to confess yesterday as she had intended. After Confession nothing ought to be eaten by the rights of the Greek Church till after Communion on the following day, & before Confession ’tis the custom to ask those with whom you live whether they have any fault to charge you with or whether you are in love & Charity with y<sup>r</sup> neighbours &c. As the Princess rec<sup>d</sup> the Communion at home Fidele was sent out of the room, Dogs being consider’d an Abomination to the Mysterys perform’d, & the Greek religion exacts the belief of transubstantiation. The bread & wine are mingled together & rec<sup>d</sup> standing. The Priest perform’d his last Mass here this Evening. The Chaunt is very melancholy and reminds one of Death. . . .

Prince Daschkaw sent a splendid dinner ready dress’d, his own servants to attend &c. &c. &c.

*Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> [March]*

“Preparations for our Journey. The Guitar Master gave me a lesson & when I went down to the drawing-room I found visitors &c and heard that little Fidelle had had 2 little Pups. I thought

that either our Journey would be put off a Day or the Dog left behind, but to my astonishment I found the Princess was determin'd to go & to take her with us. Prince D. is not at all well & looks ill ; a dinner from his House & his servants attended us again. During dinner little Fidelle had 2 more Pups. Soon after her basket was prepared, 2 of the little Dogs sent away, & we got into the Prince's carriage which convey'd us as far as one of the Gates where the Princess's equipage was waiting. There we took leave of the Prince & proceeded on our Journey. Stopt at Pavlovsk the first Station, drank tea & coffee. The Princess suffer'd a good deal of pain, the remains of her illness, friday night. I was wretchedly ill & the Dogs a little troublesome. The next station the P. got out of the carriage to hasten the horses, two officers were assisting by order of the Governor of Moscow. Mem : the Lady who quitted her Kibitka to look at the P. After sleeping all this station we arriv'd at Serpoukoff, and after eating supper without any appetite we at length got to bed by 4 in the Morn<sup>g</sup>. However as the Kibitka which contain'd our blankets & quilts was stopt in a drift of snow for an hour, we were oblig'd to manage with our Pelises instead.

26<sup>th</sup> [March]

“ Did not get up early. When I ask'd Sophia for my tooth-brush, with the greatest seriousness she gave me her own not doubting but it would be equally acceptable to me, for which reason she had laid mine by snugly & kept out her own for both our use. After drinking coffee we once more set out & arriv'd most leisurely about half after one o'clock. The Priest was at the Church door, & the Princess heard a *te deum* before she enter'd her own House which we did in two minutes after & found everything so compleatly *statu quo* that our trip to Moscow appear'd more like a dream than reality. . . .

Thurs<sup>y</sup> 29<sup>th</sup> [March]

“ . . . I changed the furniture in my apartments to-day & have arranged a charming little dressing room where I read, write & play on the Guitar. I have begun to translate into English the dear Princess's history as she writes it in french.

To MRS ROBERT WILMOT

TROITSKA. 28<sup>th</sup> March 1804

" While the Priest of the Parish dress'd in his brocaded robes, and attended by his Deacon in ditto and two chaunters in jetty surpluses &c. &c. &c. are performing a Mass before the Image of the Saint whose name stands in the Calendar on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March *old style*, the birthday of the Princess, and who is consequently supposed to be her tutelar saint thro' life,<sup>1</sup> I come for a few minutes to begin a letter to my ever dearest Eliza which I will now abandon for a moment to go and listen to the chaunting in the great Hall out of compliment to the dear Princess who is this moment, I'll answer for it, bathed in tears which her religious exercises invariably produce, tho' her Slanderers say she has no religion.

No she was not in tears, but joining in the prayers with more devotion than half the people assembled. By the by in the Greek religion no one either sits or kneels, every one stands during the service sermon and all which often takes up a great deal of time. The sign of the cross is constantly employ'd and a great deal of Roman Catholic mysteries &c. &c. remain—no ringing of Bells however. An uncharitable persecuting spirit is absolutely unknown ; on the contrary, such is the spirit of toleration that even the most uninstructed Peasant comprehends as if by inspiration that people of different nations worship the Deity in a variety of ways, and suppose all equally acceptable. A few days ago I had a striking proof of this which I must mention to you. The Great fast began a week before we quitted Moscow, during which time all music except sacred is consider'd a crime. It so happen'd however that I was disappointed of a Guitar Master till a few days before it began, and as *that sacred week* was the last we were to spend there, the Princess and I agreed that I must devote it in great measure to music. My little Sophia was rather shock'd. However after a moment's reflection she say'd, '*Etta pravida, Mavra Romanovna nie Ruskie*' ('tis very true, M.R. is not a Russian), and she was at once convinc'd that what wou'd be a sin in her religion was none in mine. There is no particular observance of Sunday. Cards, company, Balls, plays, and all the

<sup>1</sup> Saint Alexis.

business of pleasure goes on as usual, needlework also, and in many Towns Markets are held and even Shops are open. I am myself beginning to fall into these practices and must look sharp after my old playfellow Sunday who has so few priviledges Here for children, the lower orders of people, and so few restraints for those more advanc'd in life and higher in worldly consideration. . . .

*Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April*

" I can only write by snatches. Our retirement gives me less leisure than ever, as you can easily understand. One can run away from a crowd of visitors ; but where there are only three or four from morning till night each person is necessary to chase away *Lady Theodosia Ennui*. For my own part I am never less alone than when alone, not because I wish to set up for a Philosopher or Caricature Wisdom to make you laugh but because I am no sooner alone than my precious people come unbidden and interrupt everything I ought to do.

Duce take it, I am call'd to Dinner.

4<sup>th</sup> [April]

" . . . Three days ago the Princess told me that during a very painful illness which lasted several hours, the day or two before we quitted Moscow, it had more than once occur'd to her that if it pleas'd the Almighty to deprive her of life I should be left in a very different state from what she wish'd ; she therefore presented me with a Packet containing 1000 pounds sterling and has arrang'd another packet which she has address'd to me and which is intend'd to defray the expenses of my journey &c. &c. &c. I need not say how much this affection and care on her part penetrated me. It all pass'd in writing. . . .

To-day the Princess gave me several little specimens of Siberian productions and other little odds and ends which are a greater proof of her Consideration by much than what I have just mentioned, as she is an enthusiast in natural history—amongst other things the bawk of a knife which I shall send to Robert by the very first opportunity, the top of a walking stick for my father which is precious, this she sends herself, my picture which has cost a mint to my Mother, an agat ring for Kitty, and one or two other trifles which only ask to be valued as coming from

myself and this most excellent affectionate dear singular Princess. . . .

We have been here above a week and as 'tis now the critical time when the great Snows and Ice which cover'd the ground and rivers are beginning to dissolve, we are totally confin'd to the House. I have been reading for the Princess a novel, one of the most interesting natural well written books I ever read and which deserves a better name than a novel. *Nouveaux tableaux de famille* is the title. Our life and adventures go on but Slowly. Indeed the Princess has not been well and is still weak. . . .

To A FRIEND

TROITSKA. 9<sup>th</sup> April 1804

"... You know ere this, as I have communicated the event to Eliza, that we are return'd to Troitska. Two Kibitkas (which is a wooden Machine precisely like a Cradle where People place their Beds and Sleep thro' the entire of a Winter's Journey) were ready in the Court for our *femmes de Chambres*, the Coach for us, and so we return'd to Troitska. Princess Daschkaw has been unwell ever since our return. She is very weak, but is one of those happy constitutions that reserves in one day the illness of a week, aye of a Month, but Anna Petrovna tells me she is dreadfully alter'd within two years. . . .

I promis'd you an account of the day we dined at the Archbishop's of Georgia in his Cloyster with several Monks. 'tis now an old story but I must keep my word. I must begin by introducing you to the Kremlin which is a sort of Town distinct from Moscow, tho' in the middle of it, on high ground which makes it a very conspicuous object from all parts; 'tis surrounded by a Gothic Wall and the Approaches and Entrances are two Massy Gates well guarded by Soldiers, or over Bridges guarded also. Within this Wall is the ancient Palace of the Czars and the place where they are still crown'd. The Crown, the Jewels, Sword of State &c. &c. &c. are kept here. Here also are Churches, Cathedrals, Monastarys without end or measure, with Domes and Spires of Gold (of course Gilding) which strike one as Asiatic beyond measure. The entire commands a view at once grand and picturesque, as it takes in the town which surrounds the

Kremlin (and which is immense), also a distant view of the beautiful surrounding Country, the river, the Palaces, distant Churches with gilded Spires, and the immesurable extent of Forests, of firs chiefly and of every variety to animate the landscape.

In the Monastery of Tchoudoff resides the Archbishop of Georgia ; he is a refugee ; the distracted state of his own Country has oblig'd him to seek an Assylum in this as well as several of the Royal family who have been wellcom'd very cordially by the Government. In Georgia the Bishops and Archbishops are of the Blood Royal ; the latter ranks before his Sovereign. The Metropolitan I speak of was in that situation a few years ago. He is now—nothing,—but his intrinsic worth has found its level and the same deference is paid to his modest unassuming virtues which his rank entitled him at home. This does great honour to the Russians. At the door of his only Apartment, (except a little Sleeping Room) he met us. I never in my life beheld a more venerable figure or more benevolent countenance. He bless'd us one after the other with the Sign of the Cross, and each of us kiss'd his hand. He then presented to the Princess, and afterwards to Anna Petrovna and me, his relations, a refugee Prince, his wife and her Aunt. They spoke only the language of their Country ; but the Prince who was young and likewise uncommonly handsome spoke Russ, and translated the innocent compliments of his wife, who he was all anxiety about and so distracted that the Princess Daschkaw shou'd approve that every feeling was visible on his untutor'd countenance. She was young and beautiful by nature, her features perfect, but the fashion of their country ordains that every woman shou'd enamel their face. Such is the melancholy hideous effect that the entire expression of their beautiful features is lost—absolutely buried in paint, and a dull inanimate Statue is all that remains. Their Dress is singular and I think ugly. The hair is entirely hid on the forehead, two heavy large curls hang over each Ear, a little Cowl of silk embroider'd with Gold covers the Head, and a veil of Crape edg'd with a Gold fringe reaches almost to the Ground. The shape of the Gown is precisely that of my Grandmother's in the back parlor, only the waist longer and the buttons of diamonds ; The Sleeves also are long. But the Archbishop, his long black robes, his high Bonnet and long veil, the Image set in magnificent brilliants which was

hung round his neck, his Rosary and cross of black amber, his tall majestic figure and lovely Parental benevolent countenance. I do assure you I was quite enchanted with him, and almost forgot which world I was in.

Our dinner was Fish in every sort of manner, but no meat. The hospitality and primitive simplicity of his manner yet dignified, the monks &c. &c. who surrounded him, the total absence of what is call'd fashionable life. In short I cannot convey to you an idea of the effect it produced. It was such repose to one's feelings, we were so certain of conferring pleasure and even happiness merely by sharing their feast and enjoying their hospitality with cheerfulness, we seem'd to lose our own worldly wisdom and to imbibe their simplicity, and this without understanding one another's language—at least one was oblig'd to translate for the other—and *five* languages were oblig'd to lend their aid to arrive at each other's sentiments. Prince Daschkaw is ador'd by the entire Colony, he pass'd several years on the frontiers, and wherever he has once been known he establishes a character that makes him the idle of high and low. After dinner we had Coffee with milky almonds, other milk or Cream not being allow'd. We visited the Cathedral afterwards where there is a Sacred Gate, almost as large as the front of your House, of Solid Gold. . . .

12<sup>th</sup> April

“ But only think of the narrow escape I had. One Day later on our journey, and I shou'd have been a *Russian April fool* beyond redemption. You know they count time 12 days after us, consequently to-morrow is the 1<sup>st</sup> of April here and celebrated with much more keenness than with us, as are all the little superstitions, signs, tokens, fortune telling &c. &c. &c., besides the System of little presents on the Birthday, *Day of your Name* (Jour de nomme), at Easter, and hundreds of other opportunities. . . .

13<sup>th</sup> [April]

“ This morning the Princess receiv'd an account from St Petersburg that the Emperor had paid some debt that the Crown owed her. She therefore placed 100 roubles as an *April fool's cap* by Anna Petrovna's first cup of Coffee and another by mine. . . .



*To HER MOTHER*TROITSKA. 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1804

“ . . . You must now bid adieu to Balls, Masquerades, Diamonds, pearls, rubys, Stars, Garters, titles &c. &c. What then shall I do to brighten my letters ? I must moisten them with purling rills, Elevate them with blue mountains, Sublimate them with the Moon and Stars (which by the by I cannot resist talking of from time to time, as their beauty exceeds everything I ever beheld), variegate them with roses pinks and daisies, and to compleat the picture and give life to the scene, present to your mind’s eye the young perfection of her species, the interesting, the beautiful Themise !!! Themise is now four weeks and two days old, not quite as long as this paper is broad, black as Ebony with a brown spot over each Eye, a white Chitterling, & one or two other brown spots—I never saw so compleat a beauty. The Princess has twenty minds not to part with her. She feeds her out of her own Mouth, and whenever I attempt to touch her, she gets into an agony of fear I shou’d let her fall. She is as like you about her Pets as if you were Sisters, and nothing charms her half so much as when I tell her so. I think it will end in her vowing Themise is too young for me, till Themise is at least past her prime of life. . . .

The snow is all gone and the weather is at present quite mild, just like what I remember this month last year in England, a little less warm than Ireland. I don’t think I have yet mention’d the Russian Baths. I bathed yesterday Evening, and have the power of doing so twice a week if I chuse. To give you at once a just idea of it, ’tis neither more or less than the ditto of those we visited at Bath for five shillings a plunge ; but the true Russian Bath admits a Vapour which I cou’d not Support half a minute, and in the midst of that Vapour they remain for half an hour or more. Warm water [is] pour’d over the Victims from time to time till every pore is wide open. The High and Mighty then go into a Bed prepared in another little room well heated. The humbler folks frequently plunge from that state of heat into the snow. Our Bath is as we chuse, Vapour or Water. I always prefer the latter which is introduced by two conductors, one of hot the other of cold water, into a large bathing tub. You know Bathing is

a religious ceremony here ; and tho' Slander with a thousand tongues proclaims the absence of cleanliness, I freely own as far as I have seen the lower orders are superior to our country folks and the higher ones pretty equal (admitting exceptions to every general rule). But there are various striking resemblances. First a Russ Peasant infallibly scratches his head speaking to a Noble, as Paddy does when he says ' Plaise your honour's honour '. Secondly, speaking of heads, the Sundays' amusement at the Cabin doors is well known and often practised. And thirdly the Music is almost the same. You know the perfection of a true Irish tune is to hold the last note as long as possible, and then fling the voice on the same note an octave higher. Here 'tis also the proof of Excellence, and the tunes are plaintive to a degree—even Melancholy.

Certainly Gaiety is not the Characteristic of this country. On the contrary, their Music, their Dance, their countenances, all have a tendency to the *penseroso* ; and take them all in all they may be call'd extremely handsome. I speak only of the lower orders. As for the higher, I decidedly prefer our Islanders. The same principle seems to pervade all—*Servility*. I don't know whether that is a just term. Certainly there is more of politeness in their manner, and consequently less. They think themselves extremely well bred. Whether I have created a Standard of good breeding and politeness beyond a reasonable measure I cannot say, but neither the generality of the Men nor the Women fit my measure. In the lower orders one enters at once into the causes of a yielding servile disposition (it does not deserve that name). Born slaves they have not a thought of following any impulse but their masters' ; and the natural expression of their faces and tone of their Voice (which is uncommonly soft and harmonious) gives one an idea that they are not *insensible* of their dependance. At the same time there is a certain something which marks quickness and cleverness ; and they say that that is often employ'd to cheat in a bargain or impose upon credulity. With this there is an odd mixture of simplicity. For example, when I return'd Here from Moscow, four or five of the men servants and two or three of the women kiss'd my hand by way of expressing their *wellcome home* ; and I according to the custom was going to kiss their foreheads—not at all, one after the other they kiss'd my cheek as cordially as

you cou'd, my Dearest Mother. But I have seen them kiss the feet of their Masters, and prostrate themselves before them with a mock humility that shock'd me. That, however, is becoming less and less the custom. . . .

28<sup>th</sup> [April]

" My little Sophia is at present hard at work, and guess the employment. She is making me a dress, according to the costume of the Peasants of this part of the country, of glowing red nankeen. If an opportunity offers I intend sending it home. It wou'd be a fine dress in case of a Masquerade frolick. The singularity of the fashion wou'd be a delightful puzzle. I have got a little box of Cassino Markers of tortoiseshell for you ; I long for an opportunity of sending them. With the Dress the hair is to be plaited in a large plait and worn hanging down the back, tyed at the end with a bunch of ribband, necklaces without end, and as many gaudy rings as can be worn on the fingers. . . .

I am going to write you an account of a religious ceremony which I witness'd last Sunday, it being Palm Sunday. I got up between 4 and 5 o'clock to attend Matin at the Church (which by the by is a very handsome one within two or three hundred yards of the House), a crowd of Peasantry were assembled, Prayers were read and chaunted. The Gospel which describes our Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was read. A tremendous bundle of branches had been prepar'd before hand, which the Priest bless'd and sprinkled with holy water at some particular time in the service which I cou'd not, of course, understand. Immediately the people rush'd forward to snatch the boughs, and in 5 minutes every individual in the church (several hundred) stood confess'd with a green bough and a lighted wax taper. I receiv'd mine from the Priest whose hand I kiss'd upon the occasion. The service then goes on as usual, and when it is concluded every one puts out their light, and most people place the taper before a favorite Image (all the Churches abound with Images) and reserve the bough to *flog* one another when they return home for good luck. I must not omit to mention that my little Sophia flog'd me most devoutly. The people were then anointed on the forehead with the sign of the cross in holy oyle, and dismiss'd. . . .

Next Sunday being Easter Sunday I shall have something new

to write about. Every day of this week the Priest, Decon and chaunters come Morning and Evening to pray, and no creature eats meat. Miss Islainoff does not even taste fish. The Princess is not able to keep such severe fast, so she and I commit the Sin of eating what we chuse, except to-day Wednesday and on Good Friday ; but the variety of fast dishes is incredible, we had 23 to-day. . . .

*To HER FATHER*

TROITSKA. *May the 5<sup>th</sup> 1804*

" . . . We are all here in great fuss, scrubbing, washing, adorning Caps, befrilling & befurbelowing Gowns ; making Pastry, ragouts, sauces ; Churning barrels of butter, tapping Hogsheads of beer ; Whispering, looking wise &c. &c. &c. And guess what it is all about ! No no, don't flatter yourself I will betray Village Secrets before their time. Compose yourself, dearest Sir, I am faithful to my trust, but nobody knows whether Easter Sunday may not unfold a tale &c. &c. &c. . . .

*Sat. 11<sup>th</sup> [May]*

" . . . I must not forget Easter Sunday for fear another Sunday shou'd arrive and swallow it up for ever. I must however begin with Saturday Evening 10 o'clock when the service was perform'd here because it is the custom and because the Princess cou'd not attend Matins. I shall take you to church for the benefit of seeing the Images. Otherwise the service is the same, and after it is over Easter Eggs are presented painted and carv'd and decorated in a variety of ways. I have already mention'd the System of Presents in this Country. Every thing encourages it, and there are different periods when a present is indispensable. The Princess's Egg which she presented to me I am to wear at my Ear next Winter. 'tis a diamond, and another to make into an Earring, one and not two being the fashion here. In presenting the offering one must say in Russ ' Christ is risen'. The person answers ' Most certainly Christ is risen'. The humblest Peasant has a right to kiss the hand of the greatest Personage in the Empire when he says those words, and even the Emperor cannot refuse his to any creature who asks it.

But to return to our Hall at Troitska, where all the servants have presented Eggs, receiv'd presents, kiss'd hands &c. &c. &c. Let us now eat our Supper and then wait for the dread hour of *Midnight*. As the Village clock struck twelve the Church Bells rang a joyful peal. We immediately repair'd to it but found the procession already begun—the Priest with the Bible preceded by the Deacon, Chaunters and several other persons holding Images, Wax tapers &c. &c. &c. all dress'd in their very best robes which are extremely rich, chanting the Words I have already mention'd. After making the tour of the Church outside we enter'd it, every creature holding a lighted taper which with all the other lights in the Church produced a sort of Illumination, which by the by cannot be too brilliant for the occasion and in the great Towns is grand beyond description. I did not remark any thing particular in the Service, but after it was over every creature in the Church (except me) approach'd to kiss an Image and afterwards the Priest who is oblig'd to embrace them all men women and children, *three hundred* souls at least. To ascertain the fact was enough for me. I waited for about twenty, and then came home fatigued beyond measure.

At nine next morning it began again ; and before that Hour my little Sophia, after spending above an hour at the looking glass, open'd my door and came rustling like a forest in Autumn when the wind begins to Whistle thro' the dry leaves to request Mavra Romanovna wou'd tye her Sash, dress her hair, and give her opinion on the choice of a Necklace for the morning which was to be chang'd three times in the course of the day. No time was to be lost, Sophia's toylet was of real importance. I instantly put on my long Wrapper and set about the business. The church Bell was upbraiding us with laziness. Do you wish to know the Colour of Sophia's Sash ? It was a glowing pink which I had myself presented the Evening before, and if her hair had not been so unmercifully curl'd by way of grandeur, I shou'd not scruple to say she was the Bell of the Village when all was arrang'd. You are not to suppose that I was not without my finery also. By no means, but calling to mind the old advice of the Crows relative to Easter Sunday and the punishment which they prepare for those who presume to appear before them without a new Gown, I array'd my self in mine and by the advice of Jerkoff, a long thin

man who waited to conduct me by a private door to avoid the crowd, I wore a light Muslin Shawl (judge of the Weather) and soon joined the Princess and Anna Petrovna who were already there.

I remark'd nothing in particular except a tremendous cake of Bread and a Mountain of cream cheese with a cross on the top of it, but in quar<sup>r</sup> of an hour after our return to the House the Princess was summon'd to the Hall and there the Priest deliver'd the Bread and the cream cheese which is call'd the *Paschal Lamb* and which he had bless'd and cross'd &c. &c. &c. before he brought it. The Princess divided it and eating a piece herself presented another to the Priest and another to the servants. In short every creature eat of it, and untill they do no power could prevail on them, to taste milk, eggs, meat, to dance or sing, in short to infringe any of the Dutys and observances of the 7 or 8 weeks of Lent. The revelry follows close upon this. Coffee with cream, Bread with butter, every thing that can be sacrificed *on the Altar of the Stomach* is collected and eaten. We din'd at 12 o'clock, and before three I perceiv'd some 8 or 10 individuals as *sprightly* as the Jolly God himself could wish. . . .

I fancy in most countrys the business of eating and Drinking is the principal object at Easter and other Holydays. Here my friend Jerkoff has for one pay'd the tribute of neither more nor less than *over eating himself*. He is in a low fever, and 'tis a consequence so certain that no one minds it. The Ladys being more delicate suffer less. They dance more. Indeed I have never seen the Men and Women dance together, or the Men at all. Another singularity is two marry'd women dance together or two girls, but the dances for each differ and they never join in the same. Their only music is their voices, and 20 or 40 no matter what number form a semicircle and sing a romance while the performers Dance and enact it. To me it is new and interesting, but to speak my sentiments freely, it does not strike me as a picture of village gayety and merriment. On the contrary there is a something of Melancholy quite independant of Sentiment. . . .

*From HER JOURNAL**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> [May]*

" This Eve<sup>s</sup> we read the letters of the Empress Katherine 2<sup>d</sup> to Princess Daschkaw. Many of them were written while she was G<sup>d</sup> Dutchess & those letters are in the most graceful easy style of friendly correspondence. After she became Empress her style changed into more measured phrases & greater formality conceal'd under apparent respect & consideration. However her natural charming flow of language and the animated turn of her mind (w<sup>ch</sup> the Princess assures me was often the unaffected playfulness of a Child) appears thro' her affected reserve, sometimes too a sparkle of satire & always the dignity of a great personage who felt she had every eye fix'd upon her and was resolv'd to be everything she thought worthy of her. They are written in french.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

*Friday 10<sup>th</sup> [May]*

" We had a long conversation after supper on the subject of Paul 1<sup>st</sup>, His suspicion of his wife, of his son, of every one ; his guards, & the care he took to barricade his apartments. The Empress Katherine on the contrary had but a slight guard at the principal approach to hers & at the other which communicated with a staircase that open'd to the Street. Such was her confidence in the Nation that only one soldier guarded it. Yet no attempt was ever made to enter her apartments, & he was murder'd horribly in his and with the connivance of every Man almost in Petersbourg, such was the consequence of his odious crueltys. . . .

. . . . .

*Monday 20<sup>th</sup> [May]*

" . . . After our gentlemen retired Anna Petrovna and I remain'd in the Princess's room till 2 o'clock. As usual the conversation turn'd upon courts, courtiers &c. &c. The Princess was very animated. She told us some anecdotes of Peter the Great

<sup>1</sup> A translation of these letters has been printed in the *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, ii, 63-103. Several of the originals are preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy.

who she does not love.<sup>1</sup> Mem : his tyrannical & despicable display of power to one of the principal Nobles of the Empire, a M. Tatischeff. This young Man was one of the Lords in Waiting, and it seems that one of his dutys as chamberlain in office was to be provided with soft paper &c. a moving Magazine for the Emperour. It so happen'd that he forgot this honourable employment & when ask'd for the paper confess'd his want of memory. 'How !' say'd Peter the Great 'You have forgot it ! I'll teach you to have a *better memory* in future. Give me y<sup>r</sup> Wig.' (the young Man had just recover'd from a fever & wore one) The gentle Monarch snatch'd the Wig, apply'd it to a most ignoble purpose and then, presenting it to the young Man who trembled for his life he order'd him to put it on & follow him instantly into the assembly they had just quitted, where he had to endure the delicate jibes and jeers of the pliant courtiers who would no doubt [have] thought the Wig was become a *Crown of glory* had not the serious anger of the Emperor convinc'd them that poor Tatischeff had narrowly escaped the Knowt, or one of Peter's favorite amusements, *beheading*, or else applying the torture with his own hands.

When in his rage he used to beat an innocent person, & that they ventured to assure his Majesty it was *not* them, his answer

<sup>1</sup> Peter I (1672-1725), Czar of Russia, known as "the Great." Son of Czar Alexis by his wife, *née* Mlle. Natalie Narishkin. Generally regarded as the founder of modern Russia. Built a new capital on the banks of the Neva which he called St Petersburg, and gained for his country the Baltic provinces from Sweden. His gigantic energy infused the whole of the internal administration with European ideas, but in his reforming zeal he failed to make sufficient allowances for the national temperament, which was essentially Asiatic. But Princess Daschkaw's opinion of him is perhaps a little unjust. "He had genius, activity, and an unfeigned zeal to promote the improvement of his country," she wrote in her *Memoirs*; "but how were these qualities counterbalanced by his total want of education and the tyranny of his outrageous passions ! Cruel and brutal he treated all without distinction who were subject to his sway as slaves whom he believed were born to suffer. Had he possessed the mind of a great legislator, he would have permitted the example of other nations, the effect of commerce, and the sure reform of time to have had their united weight in bringing about those improvements which he with violence introduced ; or, had he known how to estimate the noble and respectable qualities of our ancestors, he would never have sought to efface the originality of their characters by the impress of foreign habits and manners which he prized so much above our own. . . . His vain-glorious aiming at the fame of a creator hastened the building of Petersburg by circumstances so little mingled with mercy that thousands of workmen perished in the marshes."



was ' Well Villain, you may remind me the next time you deserve a thrashing that you have receiv'd this one & we shall be quit', & he has been known to keep his word on the subject more than once. He sent some of the principle Lords of his Empire to learn *Gardening, Carpentry*, & such sort of menial employments in foreign Countrys which as the Princess very fairly remarks hardly merits the name of enlightening a Nation which he wish'd to make the passive tools of his power.

To HER FATHER

[TROITSKA] 30<sup>th</sup> May N.S. 1804

" If the other side is not *English* English, it is just the sort of language that might make one blush for what it is.<sup>1</sup>

I am asham'd to let what the Princess writes go to you without a little pruning. Yet in merely saying I am truly grateful for her sentiments which I know to be sincere, and in not disclaiming an Approbation which you know as well as myself is much much beyond my deserving, perhaps *truth* makes the best comment—'tis indeed certain that a single hour of the day does not pass unmark'd by her affection and kindness, and my heart acknowledges with delight a friendship so sincere and goodness so unmerited.

I sent a Letter to you yesterday. In short I have sent Multitudes within this Merry Month of May which expires to-morrow after having blossom'd and Warbled away its short Visit. You know the Seasons advance and decline more rapidly than with

<sup>1</sup> On the other side of this letter Princess Daschkaw wrote :

" I am indeed my Dear Sir at a loss to answer your kind Letter, not only from my small knowledge of the English tongue but because I am perfectly convinc'd I do not deserve your thanks. To know the adorable bewitching Girl that I am so happy to have under my roof and to love and admire her is one and an unavoidable thing. The benefit, the obligation is all on my side, and I only can assure you that one hour in the day cannot elapse without my mind and heart should not be employ'd with a warm wish to give her some satisfaction. I have not yet had the pleasure to receive the Letter M<sup>rs</sup> Wilmot has wrote to me. In the meantime I present her with my most sincere congratulations upon the happiness she has to have such a Daughter as our Dear most beloved Matilda.

As I have not a moment to lose before the Post will be gone, I beg you will tell for me all what a sincere friendship and regard can dictate to our most respectable friend M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton, and believe me Sir your most humble Servant

P. DASCHKAW.

us, and the transition from Winter and Snow to Summer and Verdure is quite surprising to a Stranger. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June I fancy we are to set out for Poland, and much as I delight in the idea of the journey I assure you I shall regret my little *Chambre de Toilet*, my Nightingales, my Orange and Lemon trees in bud blossom and ripe fruit at the same moment, and a thousand other agreeable circumstances which we shall leave behind. Perhaps amongst them is a beautiful amiable Knight Errant mounted on a fiery Charger bearing the Arms and Ensignia of all Nations, a talisman by which he can bestow happiness, pleasure, consolation to all ages, tastes &c. &c. &c. Shall I name him? Or hasten to put his Gallantry to the proof by dispatching him with this Letter to my Dearest Dearest father, and with every Assurance of Affection which the heart can dictate to you and all. Yes, off He goes. Adieu.

From HER JOURNAL

Sunday 2<sup>d</sup> June

"To-day we dined at the village of Gastechevo with a rich Peasant, the Patriarch of the Place whose family a few years ago amounted to 34 who sat down at the same table every day. 'Tis here the custom for the Peasantry to live *together* as their riches consist in themselves, their own labour &c. They farm the Ground which they have in abundance, and the more numerous a family is the richer they become. One or two learn a trade & go to some town to practice it, making of white bread for example which the Mujics (Peasants) sell in small portions & large quantities in Moscow, first however obtaining a licence from the Magistrates & a passport from their Master. Mr Sarokeen's family are become so considerable that they have made large purchases of Land. This must be done in the *Master's name*.

... At the sight of so many happy faces in a village which she herself built & which is only one of 6 in this neighbourhood. They are called Ecatrinoff, Povloffsky, Hamilton, Worontsoffsky, [blank in MS], & Gastechevo. In Poland she has built several. Several times during the day she was bathed in tears & spoke with rapture & the candour & enthusiasm so natural to her of the happiness which *her* subjects enjoy'd. She collected a troop of Women who danc'd & sang according to the custom of the

Village. We then return'd home passing thro' Hamilton<sup>1</sup> which is very agreeably situated. There are several Oaks there, but they are poor & grow badly.

. . . . .

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> [June]

"... I heard this anecdote of the Empress Anne.<sup>2</sup> She had amongst her Ladys in Waiting one to whom she was very much attach'd. This Lady made a vow to go to visit the Fortress, to confess & pray &c as was the fashion at the Cathedral. (N.B. 'tis there the Sovereigns ever since Peter 1<sup>st</sup> have been inter'd.)<sup>3</sup> The Empress being in a merry mood suffer'd her to go & at the same time gave orders that the Governor should pay her every seeming attention, invite her to breakfast to see the Apartments &c and at length beguile her into the Secret Apartment where *Justice* was administer'd, give her a *gentle flogging*, & then according to the custom of the place make her sign a promise of *profound secrecy* on pain of some real forfeiture, perhaps of life or a banishment to Siberia. Everything happen'd as was commanded by her Majesty who amused herself for weeks by enquiring of her poor favorite & friend whether she had seen all the Apartments, whether she had been *well treated*, whether she would go again &c. &c., knowing that tho' a jest the poor Countess would not venture to reveal her adventure, and if she did double ridicule & shame would be her only redress. Such are the practical Jokes of the Great.

<sup>1</sup> Called after Princess Daschkaw's great friend, Mrs. Catherine Hamilton, who was a daughter of John Ryder, Archbishop of Tuam. She was also related to Martha Wilmot, being a cousin of her father, and it was she who induced the Princess to invite Martha to Russia. See above, p. 4, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> Anne (1693-1740), Empress of Russia, daughter of Czar Ivan V and niece of Peter the Great. Succeeded Peter II in 1730, and the few good features of her unpopular decade of rule were largely due to her two able foreign advisers Ostermann and Munnich. During her reign the greater part of the Crimea was conquered by Russia from Turkey. She was on the whole well meaning, but at the same time frankly sensual, ignorant and vindictive. Delighted in crude practical jokes.

<sup>3</sup> The cathedral in the Fortress of Peter and Paul contains the mausoleum of the Imperial House of Romanoff. All the Czars from the time of Peter the Great are buried there except Peter II and Nicholas II. At first a military fortress, it was later converted into a prison and was particularly used for political prisoners. It was there that Peter I's son Alexis was tortured to death by his father's orders in 1718.

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> [June]

" M<sup>dm</sup> Narishkin <sup>1</sup> & her daughter & Countess Eudoxa Woronzow <sup>2</sup> dined here. They had scarcely quitted us when the widow Nebalsin, Count Rostopchen (ci-devant Chancellor) <sup>3</sup> & M. de Mouramzoff arriv'd to spend a few days. The fair Widow is very different from what we left her at Moscow, her spirits are much recover'd. Count Rostopchen is very agreeable, & M. de Mouramzoff rather amusing. Sometimes he is reckon'd satirical. But the everlasting mixture of french & Russ prevents my enjoying half the conversation that goes forward, as I cannot comprehend the latter language which is of course constantly used. Most foreigners complain that when they begin to interest themselves in any conversation begun in french, suddenly the language changes (& most of the *well educated* have five to chuse amongst) & they are quite in the dark with regard to the conclusion of it. What a pity it is that there is more than one language in the World.

Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> [June]

" Breakfast *in the hall*, a great deal of conversation after it,

<sup>1</sup> Anne Narishkin (1750-1807), wife of M. Basil Sergeewich Narishkin. Elder daughter of Princess Daschkaw's uncle, Count Ivan Woronzow, by his wife, *née* Marie Volinsky. Her grandfather, M. Arthème Volinsky, was the Empress Anne's celebrated minister who was executed in 1740.

<sup>2</sup> Countess Eudoxie Woronzow (1765-1824), sister of Mme. Narishkin. She died unmarried.

<sup>3</sup> Count Theodor Vasilievich Rostoptchin (1763-1826), Russian general. Was Minister of the Interior under Paul I, but on the accession of Alexander I, in 1801, he fell into disgrace for his opposition to the French alliance. He later came into favour again and was appointed military governor of Moscow, in which capacity he is believed to have ordered the burning of the city as the result of Napoleon's invasion in 1812. He subsequently denied this, but there seems little doubt of his responsibility. A cultured man of the world and a close friend of Princess Daschkaw's brothers, Counts Simon and Alexander Woronzow, and of the great General Kutusow, he was at the same time an unscrupulous *intrigant* and, besides being extremely vain, could be harsh to the point of cruelty. Princess Daschkaw considered him along with Diderot and Frederick the Great as supreme examples of male virtue. Yet he did not hesitate to ally himself with Princess Daschkaw's enemies when it suited his purpose, and when Martha Wilmot was leaving Russia in 1809 it was he who caused her baggage to be searched so thoroughly for the Princess's *Memoirs*. He married one of Catherine II's most beautiful Maids of Honour, Catherine, daughter of General Stephen Protassoff; but after a few years they became estranged by reason of her conversion to the Roman Catholic faith. He now found consolation in the charms of "the Widow," Mme. Nebalsin.

Count Rostopchin extremely agreeable. Dinner pleasant enough. The Count was my neighbour & spoke to me in English as well as french. He has been in Eng<sup>d</sup> & spent 6 weeks at Blenheim. Eve<sup>g</sup>, Walk, Ice & afterwards tea in the Temple. After Supper the Conversation lasted till Morning. Laugh'd outright at our vigils, & on retiring the different effects of sleepiness on our poor *femmes de chambres* gave us a hearty fit of laughter in our turn. 'twas the reign of Katherine w<sup>ch</sup> beguil'd the time, her Munificence, Patriotism &c. &c. &c.

. . . . .

*Monday 17<sup>th</sup> [June]*

" . . . In the Eve<sup>g</sup> a rage for drinking tea seized us. At 6 o'clock Anna Petrovna assembled in her room Count Santi, M. Worontzow, Alexander Carlovich, Sventitsky (a polish name) and me, & gave us a regal of tea w<sup>ch</sup> is her passion. We drank it again in the drawingroom at  $\frac{1}{2}$  after 7, & then went out walking. At 9 the same illustrious company assembled in my dressing room where we again quaff'd the Lady's Nectar *tea*. Carlovich play'd on the Guitar & we *all* sang most Merrily, tho' by the by even in a moment of hillarity & folly as that certainly was the Music which was chiefly russ was melancholy, tho' the words of the songs were by the way of being very lively ! Certainly there is a character in the russ music that leads insensibly but inevitably to melancholy sensations. 'tis monotonous also, beyond a doubting extremely so. After supper *all* our guests quitted us, but not till past two o'clock as the dear Princess (for reasons best known to her own affect<sup>d</sup> heart) prolong'd the game of Omber which she was engaged in with the Prince & her cousin till that hour. It was Morning before we went to bed. There is now a very very short night indeed, scarcely more than twilight.

. . . . .

*Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> [June]*

" . . . Went to the Church where was the grand Village feast of the Trinity from w<sup>ch</sup> both Church and Village take their Names. We had Nosegays in our hands, & everyone knelt during three prayers. Prayers for a good Harvest were the grand object of this solemnity. The Princess told me that she is always in terror for the Priest during the time he is administering the holy Ele-



COUNT THEODOR ROSTOPTCHIN

*From the portrait by Salvator Tonci formerly in the Imperial Foreign  
Office in Moscow*



ments of bread & wine, or rather holding the cup & plate w<sup>ch</sup> contains them over the heads of the women and children who come in crowds to be within the influence of the blessing pronounc'd, for if by one of them suddenly raising up the head or any other accident any wine should fall, the Priest would instantly & with a solemn ceremony be degraded from the office of Priesthood, the floor on which the wine was spilt taken away and destroy'd as profane, and the Priest so disgraced would be shut up for life in a Monastery. . . .

*Monday 24<sup>th</sup> [June]*

" Packing up for our Journey to Kruglo.<sup>1</sup>

*Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> [June]*

" Prince Daschkaw's Huntsman arriv'd with some commissions, & before he quitted us he cut away what's call'd the worm in the tongue of my little Themise.

At half after 12 we began our Journey, after as usual visiting the Church. . . .

*To HER MOTHER*

*June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1804. KATTOVA*

" I have just written the word *Kattova*, and what think you, Ladys and gentlemen, the place is like ? To spare your conjectures about a matter which does not merit a great number and to let you at once into the secrets of Other Worlds, know that Kattova is very like a wooden village with a great extent of Forest in view, three or four Churches, and a pretty rivulet. Such indeed is Kattova, and such is almost every place where we have Stop'd since the 25<sup>th</sup> In<sup>st</sup> when we quitted Troitska.

*KROUGLO. July 5<sup>th</sup>*

" I may boast I did not forget you on the road my ever dear Mother, but the six first lines of this letter is the only proof I can give you of the truth of what I say. The mode of travelling here is not exactly calculated for Journalizing, as you will perceive when

<sup>1</sup> An estate with 2500 serfs belonging to Princess Daschkaw in Poland. It had been confiscated from the Hetman Count Michael Oginsky by the Empress Catherine II on account of his treason to the Russian monarchy and then bestowed upon the Princess. It suffered very severely during Napoleon's invasion in 1812.



I tell you that arriv'd at the Station where we stopt the first night we enter'd a Peasant's House consisting of an empty room to which the kindness of a neighbor added a table and a few Chairs. A Bench round the Wall is a thing of course, and all the family sleep on the *top of the Oven*.

But you will like to know what our Caravan consisted of. Here it goes then as it went from Troitska. After our prayers in the Church as is customary, first the Kitchen escorted by Besilken the Butler. On the Cart which conveys this are pack'd all sorts of kitchen utensiles, of Table ditto, together with Besilken, two Cooks and the food. It sets forward an hour before the rest to prepare, to find a shelter, light a fire to dress dinner which is afterwards serv'd on silver dishes with plates, spoons, wine Glasses &c. &c. &c. of the same Material. By the bie, so compleat a service and so clever for the purpose I cou'd not have conceiv'd, for it is all pack'd into a Trunk of very small dimensions, and yet the service is large enenough for six or seven people with all the elegance of a feast, the changes of plates, napkins &c. &c. &c. After that Cart follow two more with baggage of different kinds, amongst others a trunk which when open'd becomes a Bedstead in which is found Bed, Pillows and every comfort to court Sleep ; and *à propos*, during the heat of each day the Princess repos'd if she did not sleep on it. Then follows three Carriages. In the English Coach was Princess D., Anna Petrovna, Fidelle, Themise and your humble servant ; in the *Linée* (a sort of long Jaunting Carr for six people on four Wheels with a top like the roof of a Coach and a sort of petticoat to keep off rain) were three Damsels ; and in the Calash were two more. The Men were scatter'd Lord knows how. In short we were three Ladys, five Abigals, 14 *Choloviks* or Men servants, 27 Horses & three Dogs—such was the caravan that arrived at the aforesaid Peasant's House.

The dinner was very well, and when sleeping hour arriv'd Anna Petrovna and I repair'd to a sort of Coach House where our Pavillions were perch'd on the bench of which I have made honourable mention. The Princess slumber'd on the trunk. We all slept soundly, and the next morning at 5 o'clock proceeded in the same order. The journey of the entire day was beautiful, the country so rich in wood and the Fields waving with the most abundant crops of rye which grain is now nearly ripe. That night

we stopt at a gentleman's house. He was not at home, but as hospitality is one of the characteristics of the Russians any acquaintance has a right to *visit* the habitation and we avail'd ourselves of the circumstance. However as the Princess was known to the servants every room was thrown open and a splendid supper prepar'd and a desert of peaches, plumbs, melons & strawberrys. The next Morning after tea and Coffee, we set forward, stopt to dine in a Coach House, literally Stay'd 5 hours, slept during the heat, and then went on.

I will not carry you into every village and every Coach house where we stopt. Suffice it to say the accomodations of the first night were repeated with very little change. Once the Priest of the parish shelter'd Anna P. and me, and that night a hungry cat flew ~~at~~ Themise. The Priest was happy to accept a piece of silver of less value than a shilling—indeed the offering it was *Magnificent*, so you may judge of what class the clergy are form'd, and how ill calculated to inspire the respect due to their office. Few of the common orders resist the temptation of Spirituous Liquors, and if an excuse for such excesses can be offer'd perhaps it is in this instance. One Evening the village where we halted was so poor that shelter cou'd not be obtain'd. Now don't suppose we were without a resourse, a Russian traveller seldom is upon such occasions. Finding therefore that matters were not in the best order the Princess desir'd a tent might be pitch'd, and forthwith a very Elegant one was unfurl'd and that most essential part of our Equipage stood confess'd. Once however we slumber'd in the Calash, and happy wou'd it have been for some of your friends if they had done so the last night of our Sojournment in Russia, but Fate ordain'd it otherwise. A Peasant's House was our Shelter, and the next morning the swarms of Bugs were such that at this instant I am suffering Martyrdom from the Effects of their *peculiar attention* to me.

The general face of the country was extremely rich in Wood but rather flat, parts of it beautiful wherever a river or rivulet enliven'd the scene. As this is the Season for Rye, we saw it in such profusion that I only wonder where mouths are found to destroy it, for the habitations are by no means in proportion to the extent of the Country or the promise of the Harvest. As Nature form'd the greater part of the roads we travell'd (more

particularly as the Princess avoided towns) they led us thro' corn fields *without fences*, thro' forests impervious to the rays of the sun, and close by the Houses of several Nobles. At one of these we stopt and spent a very pleasant day. The Worthy Man's name is Karshtalensky. He lives most splendidly, has seen his 73<sup>d</sup> year, is not so tall as Me, and dress's with a delicacy of cleanliness and newness that makes one suspect he keeps a Fairy to preserve the plaits of his ruffles and the Gloss of his superfine snuff colour'd Coat and splendid Star; for the Star never tarnishes like other peoples', the Gloss of his coat is never dim'd even by rain, and his ruffles never change the plait they first receiv'd, tho' they descend to the 2<sup>d</sup> Joint of his small hands adorn'd with rings. His nephew the Colonel has Berrisford's Eyes and stile of face with a beautiful set of teeth and a much handsome nose. He ought to be perfectly handsome and interesting, but he is not. Such is the magic of expression that wanting that his beauty is absolutely useless to him. He was very intimate with the illfated victim of Buonaparte the Duke d'Enghien,<sup>1</sup> and spoke of him a great deal to me as a most noble brave charming being with every quality to please in private, and it was only in private he knew him. This young man like many of the Russians is *Enthusiastic* in favour of the English nation. Buonaparte is generally detested, and yet *we do nothing*.

The day after we quitted them we enter'd poor conquer'd Poland. The national distinctions however are soon visible, tho' everything is done to destroy them. The first little Town we pass'd thro' mark'd it in one respect in the number of Jewish establishments, for that sect abound in Poland, and there I saw for the first time the Israelitish habit. Only conceive women very few degrees above Nelly your Milk Woman dress'd in a sort of winker'd cap of *pearls* which shades the face very becomingly;



<sup>1</sup> Louis de Bourbon Condé, Duke of Enghien (1772-1804), only son of Henri, Prince of Condé and nephew of Philippe ("Egalité"), Duke of Orleans. After the outbreak of the French Revolution he commanded a force of *émigrés*, but retired to Baden on the declaration of peace in 1801. In spite of the fact that he was residing in neutral territory he was seized three years later by Napoleon's orders for alleged complicity in an anti-Buonapartist plot and brought to Vincennes, where he was hurriedly tried by court-martial and shot. On hearing this news the Czar Alexander I, whose wife, Elizabeth, was Princess of Baden, obliged the Court to go into mourning and refused to recognise the French Ambassador.

above this border is a turban. Their earrings, necklaces and rings sparkle in every direction, while a sort of waistcoat of one colour and petticoat of another finish their attire. The men look like monks ; every one of them wear a small cowl of black velvet and long robes with a broad girdle round their waists ; the robes are of any stuff or colour they chuse ; their beards long, their faces pale, and infinite intelligence in their countenances. So much for the Jews. The Country (by the by the part we are in is White Russia not Poland) is much more diversified by hills and dales than what we quitted ; Lakes and very few rivers met our gaping sight. But the roads are beyond everything for beauty and goodness. They are wide and perfectly even with two rows of tall luxuriant trees at each side forming the most refreshing shade for Men and Horses and a walk that tempted us several times to quit the Carriage. This sort of road is not the frolick of a few miles but days' and days' journey. Near a Village we met a Polish Noble in the habit of his country attended by a Slave while he walk'd leisurely under the shade of the trees. The Costume is beautiful, but how shall I describe it ? Stay, fancy the Bishop of Cork's sable petticoat and belt of the richest brocade with long sleeves ; thrown over it is a robe of simpler Material of Cassimere or Shawl or fine cloath with hanging sleeves, a high cap, and colour'd boots. Such was the *Coup d'œil* of the grandee I saw. I also saw a Lady, but she was quite *à la française*.

I am sorry to say my journey is almost at an end. The second day of our entrance into *White Russia* brought us to this pretty little smiling spot which by the by brings the Princess a yearly revenue of 2600 Roubles. The end of the first day brought us to the banks of the Dnieper. Then we were oblig'd to cross the river on one of the *floating bridges* with which you are acquainted. We embark'd most manfully, Coach Horses and all (for the Princess does not know the meaning of the word fear). However it was near costing us dear, for no sooner had we reach'd the opposite Shore than one of the Horses took fright at a Hebrew who offer'd to assist him and rearing violently at length plung'd with his companion and the Postillion into the river. The Coachman was on the Box with two more in hand, all in the same traces. Happily he had strength enough to retain them till the traces were cut when the others feeling themselves disengag'd swam to

the other shore with the poor Postillion who escap'd with one or two bruises. The accident was very dangerous but providentially no bad consequences follow'd ; and a sprightly Gen<sup>l</sup> who was encamp'd with his regiment coming to offer Assistance, we soon forgot what had happen'd and accompanied him to look at the Camp, which being very like all other Camps and the Princess not accepting tea &c. &c. we return'd to our own Tent which was pitch'd *for fear of the bugs*, and so ends my Story.

It was a little town call'd Orsha where we stop'd. The next morning we visited some of the many Monasterys which are there ; one a Jesuits' was very splendid or rather very very tawdry—their hair was cut most fantastically, bald on the top, then a band or a circle of short hair, and then bald again round the forehead and lower part of the pole. It was the end of that day July the 4<sup>th</sup> which brought us to Krugla where we now are ; and having prated long enough of our ten days excursion, I am going to ask you whether you have had any tydings of the Russ Peasant's dress which I sent to Moscow to be forwarded to St Petersburg the day before we quitted Troitska. The Picture &c. &c. had been despatched before.

I shall soon introduce you to the Jews' Synagogue and several of the fraternity, for the village of Krougla has several families resident in it. The Princess has already receiv'd the visit of one (M<sup>rs</sup> Hoanen) whose dress is the same as I have already described except that being rich the materials are better and her pearls are as large as this  and this  with diamonds intermingled, and on one of her fingers a perfect shield of a ring all of the most sparkling brilliants. In this dress she makes bread, sweet meats, Cakes and what is more Candles. In short she is never seen less Magnificent and very often she is much more so.

We are to have a fair here very soon where no doubt I shall see plenty of Jews. By the by, in Russia, and here the same, to every estate there is a village in the stile of Newmarket<sup>1</sup> remov'd from the Lord's Castle which often stands in the middle and often is a very insignificant building of Wood. This House is simple, tis of Wood but well built and extremely cheerful.

Adieu for the present my ever Dear Mother.

<sup>1</sup> Newmarket, County Cork.

11<sup>th</sup> [July]

“ See what an interval of time has elaps’d since I cou’d have sent this letter if I had had an opportunity, but Mogiloff our post town is 50 versts distant and for 2 or 3 days more nobody can go there. The Fair of the Village has taken place and we have all made purchases without end. I wish’d to procure a *fairing* for you, and I shall in a few days. ’tis a shawl of Muslin in imitation of Turkish Shawls, and beautiful. The real Turkish are rather too expensive for Me, not less than 2 or 300 roubles. The Princess has bought mints of things. We had a very good opportunity during the fair of seeing the National dances &c. &c. They are much more animated than those of Russia, and there as usual I saw my old acquaintance the Bagpipes who as usual collected 6 or 8 couples of dancers, *Lads as well as Lasses*, who footed it away as merrily as heart cou’d wish. They had also fiddles, Dulcimers &c. &c. and tho’ they appear much poorer than the Russians and even the Countenances of several express *Meanness*, discontent, and (their origin) poverty, yet no sooner does the Music strike up than they appear to forget everything but the joy inspiring sound to which they yield without reserve, continuing their sports till fiddle, Dulcimer and Bagpipe first nod, then nap, and at last *sleep profoundly*.

Our weather is once more become sultry to a pitch. We have had some visitors here ; the Governor of Mogiloff,<sup>1</sup> a very gentlemanlike Man, M. de Chermisiva (a Russian you may be sure) ; also M. Balk, his lady and 2 sisters extremely pleasing. They spent two days here. The dear Princess has arrang’d a little party to Mogiloff which is to take place in 4 or 5 days. We are to see all that’s to be seen, go to a Ball which the Governor is to give, visit the environs &c. &c.

Adieu once more my Dearest Mother. Princess Daschkaw desires her kindest comp<sup>ts</sup> & regards. Anna Petrovna begs not to be forgot.

<sup>1</sup> M. Michael Bakunin (1764-1837), Russian senator. He married Varvara, daughter of M. Ivan Goleneshchewo-Kutusow.

To MRS ROBERT WILMOT

KROUGLO 17<sup>th</sup> July N.S. 1804

"... Good Heaven what a storm ! I have taken the pen the moment a perfect deluge of rain burst upon us and render'd the lightening less dangerous ; but even while I write flashes of it pass and dazzle my eyes. No never did I see anything equal to it ; and the thunder is more loud, more awful than words can express. The Princess is perfectly at her ease and so is Anna P. from downright habit. The Climate here is now so intensely hot that these collections of furious fiery flame burst 2, 3 and often 4 times in a week. Oh had you seen it three days ago or rather nights ! I stood at an open door because the Grandeure and awfulness of the scene was beyond my conception. Sometimes the Sky was from a perfect black illumin'd in the twinkling of an eye with sheets of flame. Another moment it darted zig zag across the heavens ; once it darted up in a spiral form, and once I saw a round Globe of fire burst and throw out sparks and little balls. The thunder was not so terrific as now because it was distant, but it lasted longer ; and never, no never did I behold a more majestic grand sublime but I honestly own petrifying Sight than it was. . .

Before I quit Krougla for Mogiloff I must introduce you to our Jews' synagogue. You know the foundation of their religious principles are the ten Commandments and the essence of it (their religion) to enact the Old Testament. Yesterday Evening they were sinners in the Wilderness sorrowing for their transgressions. I cannot tell you whether like a certain Magdalene they had *qualified* themselves for the occasion or *what* the occasion was, but after sunset all pearls, diamonds, rich Cloaths &c were laid aside and the worst of every sort Collected. The metamorphas might almost be call'd *Sack Cloath and Ashes*. In this trim they walk'd with down cast eyes and penitent countenances to the School (as the Synagogue is call'd). There the Men and Women seperated by a high partition sat. . . . Nothing distinguish'd the *Rabbin* except that seated by his side a Jew read in a low mumbling whining tone of voice which I'll venture to say no one but himself listen'd to ; and from time to time the Rabbin corrected him. Most of the congregation had books, and read and wept for themselves, one in particular sob'd aloud. A few miserable candles in

the hands of a few gave a glimmering of light, and there were more than usual for the Princess who they knew wou'd go to the Synagogue. In this manner they continue for hours. The School is a poor paultry dirty building. The ten commandments are enclos'd in a sort of high Press and that alone is ornamented. At particular times of the year a young child carries them through the congregation on his head. One Seat is higher than the rest on which the Rabbin sometimes sits and preaches. After they had thus pray'd for several hours they return'd home, but not to the *inside* of their Houses. Every one must sleep on the *bare Earth*, and they do so most strictly, being tenacious to a degree of all their ceremonies.

On the Sabbath day which begins friday Evening and continues saturday the first signal of its arrival is an illumination which takes place in the house of every Israelite poor or rich. From that moment it becomes a sin to *carry* anything. A Mother cannot carry her Infant, a Housewife her Keys ; shou'd a pocket handkerchief drop it must not be taken up by a Jew and a hundred other things. Our rich Jewess Mrs Hoanen being both a Mother and a thrifty house-keeper could consign her child to a christian but could not entrust her Keys underneath whose influence were untold treasures. The consequence was the poor woman could not budge because certain scrupulous people had deprived her of one means which there is for eluding such observances, and this is the means. Place a high post at the side of one Street and an equally high one opposite ; suspend a Cord between them. As long as this token remains Keys and children may cling to the Matrons, milk pales, love letters, pocket handkerchiefs, and fans if they have them, to the young damsels, and crutches may still support old Men. Such is custom, such is Ceremony, such is Sin, and such is Absolution ! The Princess permitted consciences to be quiet, quiet consciences permitted the Cord to be at rest, the Cord permitted gooddy Hoanen to carry her keys, the carrying her keys encouraged her to quit her house, the quitting her house induced her to go to the synagogue, and thus did she at the end of six months, ' eat her bunch of black berrys ' and say her prayers in peace.

Mogiloff. I have not a moment to add a word.

Adieu my precious Eliza. May Heaven bless you.

Ever and ever Your fondly Aff<sup>te</sup>

M. WILMOT.



## TO HER MOTHER

[19<sup>th</sup> July 1804]

"Mogiloff this beautiful Friday Evening, just going to the Ball of the Governor, but what the day of the Month is I no more know than my satin slippers made of your own Gown, my ever dearest Mother, in which I am going to foot it away as merry as a cricket. I thought I shou'd have had hours to write, and yet here I am without a minute ; nor to say anything of the other side of this paper which will I think delight you in every sense of the word.<sup>1</sup> But the dear Princess allows me to say that she will give you leave to send *Me* two or three volumes of some new book. *Castle rackrent* wou'd be I am sure a very acceptable present from *you to her, or the farmer's boy*, or (whisper) a Novel ! Yes a Novel !

Now dearest dearest Mama tear off this side and burn it, for

PRINCESS DASCHKAW to MRS EDWARD WILMOT

KROUGLO, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1804

"It is only yesterday that I have the pleasure to receive, my dearest Madam, your kind letter. I can indeed only refer to the letter I wrote to M<sup>r</sup> Wilmot for to make you a true and faithful picture of my feelings towards your dear and estimable child, and the sense of obligation (that I cherish to have constantly in my mind) I am under to her respectable Parants to have bless'd me with her society.

You must forgive me Madam if I being so bad a Scribler presume to criticize a word in your letter—viz : *Etiquette*. This word must never pass between us, particularly being link'd by so tender and strong ties. Besides from my Kradle I abhorred *Etiquettes* and ceremonies, and when thrown by chance into the Hemisphere of Court I frankly call'd myself a *Niveteé a la Cour*, so little was I versed in those high fashions and so little had I power over my frankness and Simplicity of Manners.

And now Madam that I have unvail'd my self to you, I will frankly tell you not to send, nor permit to the rest of the family to send to our child, any things, because it is a great expence for to get them forwarded to her, and when she gets them she gives the half away. I could not help laughing when I saw the 4 pieces of white ribon send to her when she had some hundred different one, and when she was promis'd to have some English Museline send when 2 days ago she bought at the fair here some beautiful English Museline cheaper than you can have it in England. For God sake do not send nor let send anything to our Darling, we shall not know what to do with trunks. Except 4 pair of Shoes and 2 pair petinete Gloves nothing must come to her.

My best wishes and friendly compliments attends M<sup>r</sup> Wilmot, and then I must resign paper and pen to our Daughter. Adieu Madam, you are a happy Mother. God grand you may long enjoy that blessing.

P. DE DASCHKAW.

J'embrasse en idée et de tout mon cœur Les charmantes Sœurs de mon aimable enfant.

I know you will shew our dear Affectionate *broken English* to the neighbours ; and mind that English is one of 5 languages and the one she knows least of.

Adieu. God bless you, my dearest dearest Mother.

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> [July]*

“ To-day we eat sweetmeats & ices with Mrs Hoanen. Her daughter is with her, a pretty little creature 14 years old who has been married 2 years & not loving her husband (who is now 13) she spends as much time as possible with her Mother & is bargaining for a divorce ; she offers 100 Duckets, he insists on more before he restores her liberty. Many of the Jews marry at 9, 10, & eleven. The daughter in law was there also, she is very pretty & *was* much more so. Amongst the jews there are great beautys & always of a very interesting turn of countenance. The Princess told me that in White Russia only 1700 Jews pay the tax to the Crown, but that there are at least 100,000 in the Country. Their incessant Journeying from place to place gives them the opportunity of evading the rights of any particular Government & by that means they preserve the Money which they ought to pay & go on increasing increasing in riches distinct from Christians & their power *really* known only to themselves. Such is the shame which the Peasants attach to serving a Jew that there are 2 orphans here literally penniless & destitute, & yet because the Princess reason'd with them & recommended them to accept Mr<sup>s</sup> Hoanen's very handsome offers if they would live with here they have been 3 days in floods of tears with every symptom of grief & almost despair.

. . . . .

*29<sup>th</sup> [July]*

“ This Morning Anna Petrovna & I accompanied by Madame Hoanen went in the *Linée* to see a Jew's christening. The ceremony of Circumsicion & a few prayers which were mumbled lasted not five minutes. A young boy presented the Infant to a man who presented it to another who presented it to the Rabbin, (all the Jews were cover'd with large white shawls which form'd even a kind of veil) the Rabine laid the Child in a sort of bed prepared

for the occasion. The preparations turn'd me so sick I could not look at the ceremony, but the Rabine spat a little blood which he drew from the Infant who shriek'd once or twice & all was over.

I'm told there is some superstition which prevents the Jewesses from covering their heels with shoes, & in truth I have since I heard it remark'd that every one of them wear *slippers* made so expressly. . . .

*Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> [August]*

" . . . This Eve<sup>s</sup> the Princess told me various Wonders, some true such as the dead body of her husband's Grandmother which she saw in a vault at Kiew after 32 years interment unchanged in form or feature tho' the quilted satin w<sup>ch</sup> lined her Coffin was so discolour'd & consumed by time that the Bishop order'd it to be changed,—the body was *not* embalmed ; another devotee a Man who buried Himself in the earth up to his chest, but eat bread & drank water till he died, a Martyr in this World to expiate his sins for heaven—he also was still in that situation, half buried & perfect as when alive.

The *Friend* of the Worontzow family is S<sup>t</sup> Dimitrius who when a terrestrial Bishop prognosticated various things, amongst others the Wealth &c. &c. of their House. His picture is now become an Image & is the titular one of many houses. *Boghu* is the Russ for Deity, 'tis for that reason the images are call'd so by the ignorant. One is placed in every chamber, & the lower orders always bow to it & cross themselves before they salute their Masters, tho' afterwards they sometimes prostrate themselves on the ground & *kiss their feet*. The higher orders on rising turn to the Image & crossing themselves they say the little prayer after meat, and on a journey &c. &c. always take one or 2 with them.

TO MISS ANNA CHETWOOD

KROUGLO 7<sup>th</sup> August, N.S. 1804

" . . . The Princess and I are now *tête à tête*, for Anna Petrovna quitted us yesterday to go for a fortnight to her father Gen<sup>l</sup> Islainoff who is within 200 versts of Kruglo at Mintska. I am so accustom'd to her *excellence* M<sup>lle</sup> Islainoff (for every son and

Daughter of a Gen<sup>l</sup> bear the title of *Excellence*) that her room which opens into mine, her trunks, Bed, table, chairs &c. &c. is so like *Memento Mori* that I am astonish'd to find what an influence of Melancholy it has gain'd over my spirits. And here too I am surrounded by people whose language I do not understand, and the dear Princess is not well. Altogether it gave me such a twitch last night that ought to send me to my grammer and vocabulary for 12 hours out of the 24. She is much better to day, and her illnesses are nothing in fact, for tho' weak to-day she will tomorrow be as strong as a Lion ; and to say the truth my frights are very transient thanks be to God, for were they to substantiate themselves into a habit I shou'd be in a sad way.

The Jews who inhabit this place are a most singular race. Added\* to all the Sabbath day prejudices which I strung for Eliza in my last letter, I have since learn'd that 'tis unlawful to be guilty of an *Accouchment* on that day, and shou'd a Woman have that Misfortune no *accoucheur* can attend, unless in cases of the most extreme danger. 'tis likewise irreligious to fall sick, or shou'd a person tumble down and break a bone or two no surgeon on *their* Sabbath day must set it till after sunset unless death was to be the certain consequence of delay. Don't imagine this observance is slightly attended to. Far from it. What I tell you comes from Jews themselves who practise all I say and a great deal more. For example, when M<sup>rs</sup> Hoanen was a young girl of 12 (for she was married before 13 and many marry at 10) she happen'd to be travelling on a friday returning to her village with one servant. Some accident delay'd her, the sun declin'd, she quak'd for fear, the sun set, she stopt short and happening to be in a wood there she was oblig'd to remain in the very same spot, tho, in momentarily danger of being devour'd by Wolves, till the bright orb of Day again slumber'd in the west and unchain'd her from her Captivity. During the interval you may suppose how alarm'd her family was. *N'import !* No Jew cou'd travel on the Sabbath day and no enquiry whatever was made after her ! There is a day in the year when 'tis an act of religion to be *intoxicated*, and another day and a half or 30 hours compleat when 'tis almost necessary to remain in the Synagogue without quitting it to eat, drink, or sleep—this is a thanksgiving for their deliverance from Egypt. I am to see a Wedding in a few weeks. As yet I know

nothing of their Burial service. They wou'd not eat with Christians for any bribe ; and Money is, you know, the grand touchstone with them more than any other people, the love of it is literally implanted and the Effects visible in Brats of less than 2 years of Age.

8<sup>th</sup> of August

" 'tis very early in the day, my dearest Anna, and I find the Princess has had a miserable night. She suffers a great deal and is very weak this morning, but I have no doubt before night she will be quite well again.

I enclos'd my last letter to Eliza a few minutes before we went to the fête given by M<sup>dm</sup> de Bakoonin to celebrate her spouse's *Jour de Nom*. But let us return to the Evening before when I persuaded my fair companions M<sup>dm</sup> Walkoff, M<sup>dm</sup> de Surmine and M<sup>lle</sup> de Cheremitzen (3 sisters) to walk with me thro' the town on the ramparts, and of the little there was to be seen to see it all, Mogiloff being a small town but the ramparts very high and very frowning and very threatening to the bold Invader of its privileges. However *l'Eglise de S<sup>t</sup> Joseph*, which Catherine the 2<sup>d</sup> built to commemorate her interview with the Emperor Joseph of Germany on their *first partition*, is a monument of the weakness of external defenses where *subtile Policy* has glided in and canker'd the heart.<sup>1</sup> From the Ramparts the views are very extensive and the Dnieper winds its silvery way thro' many a verst of near and distant Landscape. The House where we repos'd being very small and belonging to M<sup>dm</sup> Cheremisen who we spent a day with in the Country and were the guests of in town, Mother to the 3 sisters I have mention'd who together with Children and children's Children made eight souls without naming the *femmes de Chambre* who swarm *partout*, moreover having a shrew'd suspicion that a race call'd Bugs shar'd the rights of hospitality with us, M<sup>lle</sup> Islainoff and I beg'd and at length obtain'd permission to slumber in the Coach which stood inoffensively in the Yard with some 5 or 6 other Coaches, and a very snug little apartment we found it. By the by, if you do not know that the Cheremisens live in the country and occupy the House I speak of, only once in a Century, you will

<sup>1</sup> By the first Treaty of Partition signed in 1772 Russia gained from Poland the territory beyond the river Dnieper known as White Russia.

no doubt be astonish'd at its dimensions, cleanliness &c. &c. They do then, so that accounts for it. Turning a Coach, a Calash &c. &c. into a sleeping room is by no means uncommon or extraordinary. The Princess had her travelling Bed prepared and every one brought their own pillows &c. &c. &c., but that is a thing more *of course* than bringing a night cap, for many a nymph sleeps without one.

The morning was divided between purchases from Jews and Visitors who crowded to wait on the Princess. Three Dresses of Sattin, a pair of Earrings of Cornelian and pearl with a locket set in pearls were amongst the things with which the Princess presented Me, and to every one of the party she gave some elegant token of her noble nature which delights in giving. We din'd at the Governor's where there was a large party assembled, and very pleasant it was. M<sup>dm</sup> Bakoonen is a merry little woman, sets up for a *belle esprit* and has at all events the Wit to assemble pleasant people and banish form as much as possible. Passionately fond of the theatre and all belonging to it she exhibits her own talents which if not first rate are very well and possess one merit particularly valuable in a private actress which is often wanting from various causes, she is never out in her part, and should she fail in a word she enters so compleatly into the spirit of it that she wou'd at once give the sense in language so good that nobody cou'd suspect the change. Her brother Colonel Kutuzoff is the very image of Col<sup>n</sup> Bradford<sup>1</sup> and possesses the same talent as his Sister. The Governor is a most amiable gentlemanlike man.

Immediately after dinner we retir'd to our own Castle where most of the party slept for an hour, the heat being insupportable. At Six we were dress'd for the Ball and return'd to the Governor's where M. Bakoonen led princess Daschkaw into a little theatre arrang'd for the occasion and '*Les projets de Mariage*' was perform'd with great spirit and extremely well. Afterwards a Ballet was danc'd by 3 of their children in a Wood where was an altar with Bakoonen's Cypher and a flame which the Motto told those

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas Bradford (1772-1853), soldier. Served with distinction in the Irish Rebellion of 1798, for which he was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel. Led Bradford's brigade in the Peninsular War, and later commanded the troops in Scotland and the Bombay Presidency. In 1812 Martha Wilmot married his younger brother William (1780-1857), Rector of Storrington and later Chaplain to the British Embassy in Vienna.

who understood Russ wou'd never be extinguish'd because conjugal and filial love wou'd ever fan it. Towards the end of the Pantomime two of the three children darted into a thicket and leading in each an infant of 2 or 3 years of age with Garlands of flowers, they hung them on the altar ; and forming the most beautiful group imaginable raising their innocent little hands and eyes as if imploring the blessings of Heaven for their father the Curtain drop'd. The Effect was uncommonly beautiful and unexpected, the father was bathed in tears and many a lily white pocket handkerchief wav'd in tender sympathy and no doubt inclos'd the pearls of Sentiment. The Ball which follow'd was extremely animated and agreeable. The Colonel who resembles Bradford was very pleasant and attentive ; he flirted with me thro' the serpentine Mazes of two Polonaizes which walk (for 'tis no more) is the only *dilassement* one has. The fatigue and formality of Country dances where two regimental files are placed *vis à vis* and where a moment's desertion is follow'd by a *court martial* and *Condemnation* being intolerable *à mon Sentiment*. The supper was pretty in the Theatre, where M<sup>dm</sup> de B. and the Governor attended upon all the Guests. You will wonder what Princess D. does at Balls. She plays at Whist or Boston, and at the end of every rubber comes to look at me, dear affectionate kind being as she is. . . .

*From* HER JOURNAL

*Friday 9<sup>th</sup> [August]*

“ The dear Princess pass'd a very restless night. A dose of Castor Oyle has quieted her bowels very much & she is now better. Mem : she mention'd to me a few minutes ago that near Archangel there is a district where almost every creature becomes blind at Sunset & in the twilight are incapable of distinguishing any object, so much so that some boatmen were rowing a family to land & when the Sun set & becoming as usual blind they declar'd it was impossible for them to go any further. Their Eyes did not change to appearance, but on attempting to proceed their helplessness was soon visible, & one of the passengers was oblig'd to steer *at all hazzards* tho' in strange water. There is a name for it in Russ to signify *Hens' blindness*.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> [August]

' At 10 o'clock this Morn<sup>g</sup> the Princess, Mrs. Hoanen, Katinka & I set out in the *Linée* for a Wood at another village belonging to the P. 25 versts off. The drive was very agreeable. So many different sorts of Corn &c. &c. gave a great richness to the appearance of the Country & the Sarazens' Corn so white, the flax with its blue flowers, the peas so green, the wheat oats &c. &c. had a very agreeable effect. The Country too is excessively varied in its form, the number of villages, & churches in most of them ; the wood which abounds &c. &c. Altogether a more happily gifted country is not easily to be met with.

Arrij'd at the wood we walk'd a little way into it to see the manner in which the natives take the honey from the wild bees. The fir tree in which was the hive was very high & the stem for a considerable way up perfectly smooth, not a branch or knot &c to be seen. I'm told the trees are prepared when young. A little above the first branches a slit is made in the stem which opening by degrees encourages the wild bees to take shelter there. The opening is nearly closed by a piece of wood prepared to fit it. When the Peasants know there is a rich hive, they prepare to rob it, & their manner of climbing the tree is very curious. One of the Peasants took a long rope which he partly wound round his body. He then threw one end of it most dexterously round the tree, tying it into a Slip Knott & leaving a sort of stirrup for his foot. In this stirrup he stood *firm* & threw up the other end of the rope in the same manner, again making a slip knot & thus alternately stepping from one & untying the other & throwing it up till he reached the first branch. Then he stop'd, the last Knott remaining. He then threw down a long rope to which a Man below tyed a flambeau of lighted wood to preserve him from the rage of the Bees who would otherwise punish his audacity. This he fasten'd to a sort of Chair ty'd round his body before he went up & ready for use. A hachet was next sent up by the same messenger with which he open'd the hive, placing the *door* on a Nob of wood which also answers another purpose. Lastly a pail of Wood to receive the honey was sent up which he cut in large flakes of honey comb, first flourishing his smoky piece of wood before the astonish'd Bees who Clung to their Hive to the last



moment. He did not take enough of their Store to make them forsake the tree, but slinging the pail on the rope he instantly closed the Hive & told us the aforesaid little *Nob* was intended to hang the *trap* for the Bears upon, which by *moving* perpetually with the weight of the Animal slaps her in the face every attempt she makes to suck the Hive, & saves the commonwealth from the Her depredations by that means.

After seeing this very curious & ingenious contrivance (by the by, the poor Man who I have left in the tree slings himself to a rope & comes down like his Pail &c. &c. &c.) we proceeded to the village of Ilkavitch where we just went into the Church for form's sake, then into the House where dinner was prepared for us. Jews must not eat with Christians, so M<sup>rs</sup> H. quitted us as soon as ours was prepared. After it was over the Princess perceiv'd a Hungarian Merchant (Pedlar) & call'd him in. He was a tall slight young Man, *very tall*, his dress a jacket lin'd with Ukranian sheeps' skin black, that pretty curl'd fur, the colour of his dress light blue, pantaloons the same ; large boots, white waistcoat. His assistant's dress was the same form & nearly the same material. Their goods (in wooden boxes *slight*) were no great things, but their dress & effect was singular & I ask'd the P. about them. She told me the Hungariens were in general very tall & well made, rather *simple*, & *that* was the national costume.

We visited the farm—Mem : finland Rye with *six* sides, the admirable Granary &c. &c. &c.—and after a day which pleased me excessively we again set out for Kruglo where we arriv'd only in time for supper.

. . . . .

*Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> [August]*

" . . . This Eve<sup>g</sup> I obtain'd *permission* for Gabriel & Katinka to marry & we shall have a wedding immediately on our arrival at Troitska. . . .

*Monday 19<sup>th</sup> [August]*

" I was awoke this Morn<sup>g</sup> by the arrival of Anna Petrovna who return'd from Minska in high delight with her visit. She brought me a little ring. How I dislike presents.

As soon as we had drank our coffee & A.P. had told us all the news &c. &c. we set out on another expedition to Ilkavitch.

Today we saw the Garden bee hives in the wood, 20 *hives*, each a hollow stump of a tree. The honey is exquisite and in great abundance. We also saw a man climb up a tree to a wild Bee Hive with the help of his rope, & the *Trap* for the Bears which was not the flapper but a little surprise for the Bear who on touching a piece of wood which he must necessarily touch to arrive at the Honey suddenly tumbles down to the ground follow'd by 4 or 5 logs of wood which come clattery after him, & he is a very lucky Bear if he escapes with life; to escape unhurt is nearly impossible. Again we din'd at the Stewards' House with the Princess's Kitchen &c. &c. &c., again eat M<sup>rs</sup> Hoanen's cakes & fruit &c. her coffee, her tea and so forth.

While the Princess was at the Grange, to Anna Petrovna's utter dismay I beg'd to see a Man who has the Polish *disorder* of matted hair; 'tis very disgusting apparently matted into 12 or 14 little locks from dirt. No skin surrounded what I saw, & it appear'd to me to be merely the result of neglect. I ask'd him whether he ever comb'd his head. He confess'd *never*, for that it gave him great pain to attempt it. I gave him 10 Copiks for *the sight*. It was immediately blazon'd thro' the village that I did so, upon which All those who had it flock'd to regale my eyes with so charming an object, & I saw a little Urchin of 5 or 6 years old twisting his pretty flaxen hair into little locks to give it the desired appearance & gain the *reward*. As the 5 Copik pieces are very heavy I had no great stock so soon escaped the *attentions* of the villagers whose dirt & poverty is rather unattractive from being attended with a horrid smell. 'Tis remarkable that the roman catholic religion here as in Ireland keeps its votarys *poorer* than the greek, & in Poland these are a great number. The hair was not matted close to the head of the man woman or child, each of whom I examined closely, so that I'm persuaded by cutting it off the next growth might be natural hair. However 'tis regarded as a blessing & beauty, & as such preserv'd with care.

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> [August]

"... This Eve<sup>g</sup> the dear Princess had a most blessed escape. The high stands which are erected in the field where the Grange is to dry the corn &c. before it is laid up for winter were nearly full, the last was loading by the peasants when the P. who had been

giving directions went to visit a Calf close by. She had scarcely walk'd 200 yards when she heard a violent crash, & in half a minute one of the great stands loaded with oats up to the very top, *13 rows*, fell down flat & must inevitably have crush'd any Mortal who was within its reach. She was *barely out of it*, but thank God no harm was done. She says 'tis the 18 or 20th hair breadth escape which she has had, & that so many instances of a protecting Providence gives her a degree of confidence which some people might call *too much fearlessness*, but that the sensation of *fear* really is unknown to her.

*Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"... The Princess is writing her History very diligently at present, but 'tis really astonishing to see with how little trouble it gets forward. She settled long accounts with her Steward, then writes half a page, then perhaps she settles a law suit between two peasants, then writes again ; in short she does not stop half a minute to consider what she shall say or to compose her sentences every word flows as naturally from her pen as in common conversation & every event crowds to her memory in the most perfect State of *readiness* and *exactitude*. In short it would have been a million of sins if she had continued to withhold from the public the events of a life so interesting as hers or the sentiments of a heart so little known and so often misrepresented.

*Monday 26<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"Today being a holiday we went to the village Church, after which we proceeded (the Princess, Anna Petrovna & I on one side of the *Linée*, the *Nivesta* or *Promise* Katinka on the other) to another village where was a merry meeting in honour of the day. The Polish costume for the Women is a long loose great coat of light blue Cloath with black cuffs & cape, a handkerchief dy'd round their heads, & the longer the end that hangs behind the better. But at the Church of *Les Uniés* there was a crowd of Gentry (*soi disant*) whose attire was most disgusting—scraps of wash'd Gauze of dirty white muslin, odds & ends of ribbon &c. &c. for their Heads, dirty white or colour'd gowns ; in short more compleat *trollops* I never yet beheld. It seems to *constitute* a

Polish Noble (or Gentleman) it is sufficient for 8 or 10 *Gentlemen* to swear he is so, & immediately a Peasant becomes entitled to the privileges of a Gentleman *born* such (provided one of the 10 acknowledge him to be their relation). Underneath the great coat which the Country Girls wear they have a Corset made close to the Shape of colour'd Silk or Satin, a petticoat of another colour & an apron of Muslin either plain or figured. Their *Sleeves* are large white ones like a Man's Shirt. The Princess tells me 'tis like the Swiss costume, 'tis excessively pretty & even the great coat when open gives a graceful appearance.

The feast to-day was on account of the *Death* of the Virgin Mary. The words *Holy day* are easily interpreted into a day to make merry, & if the people first assemble at church to pray they likewise never fail afterwards to assemble in a Barn or out of doors to dance, to sing, to eat, & above all to *drink Brandy* (which is distill'd in great quantities at Kruglo & even forms a considerable part of the revenue) till they become compleatly intoxicated and riotous. This certainly influences the Morality of the People ; Princess Daschkaw assures me she scarcely ever come here that one or more of her Servants are not ruin'd by the example.

*Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> [September]*

“ I happen'd to hear that M<sup>lle</sup> Surmine is likely to be married soon. To be sure she has never seen the *promis* but the relations are arranging matters which is *all the same*. Her wedding Clothes are prepared, & on that subject Anna Petrovna gave me the history of the Russian practice of preparing *le Dot* almost from the birth of a Girl unless the Parents are remarkably rich. The Wedding Clothes are a very considerable expence & therefore purchas'd by degrees. Table linnen, sheets & even Plate is consider'd essential besides clothes in profusion & a bedstead & furniture which is most expensive & magnificent. When the bride is to go home to her Mother in law all these riches are collected, jewels, lace &c. &c. &c., they are placed in order & a Priest chaunts a *te deum*, sprinkles and blesses them ; they are then pack'd up by young ladys & sent forward to the Mama as well as presents for her & her family which compliment is return'd by them & matters are equal ; but the best of all is that a dozen shirts are made ready

for whatever spouse the will of the Lord May send into a family. The multitude of linnen &c. &c. &c. the bride has is incalculable & prevents the necessity of purchasing for years.

. . . . .

*Monday 16<sup>th</sup> [September]*

“ . . . Governor Backoonen & M. Whiteteck arriv’d to dinner. The former brought me some blessed intelligence respecting the Russians having avow’d their intentions of befriending England against the french ; also the projected Northern Coalition, Germany, Sweden & Denmark. Heaven send them success.

We drank Coffee at Hoanen’s & there we saw rods made of bullrushes ty’d together which they carry on certain occasions to typify Moses’s being found amongst bulrushes by Pharoa’s daughter &c. &c. &c. The Princess enquir’d of Hoanen at what time & *how* their existence as a Nation ended. His answer was that the Mother of Jesus Christ was *related* to Queen Illa the wife of Herod who reign’d alone after his death, and far from persecuting Our Saviour she wish’d to protect him from the rage of those who sought after his life. In consequence of this half of her subjects revolted & Civil Wars ensued. She ask’d assistance of the romans & obtain’d it, as it is often granted in order to undermine a government, excite discontent & at length become its Masters. Such was the conduct of Scipio and other generals who espoused the quarrel of Queen Illa. In one of the intestine revolts she was murder’d, the Romans then laid aside the Mask, Jerusalem became an easy Conquest, but they date their *dissolution as a Nation* 80 years after the death of Christ by which time the persecutions against them were at their summit. They comfort themselves however by the promises & prophesys in the bible and if the most undeviating attention to the Ceremonys of their Creed can merit their fulfillment they may surely claim it. . . .

*Thurs<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> [September]*

“ I am just return’d from the Jews’ synagogue where Anna Petrovna & I went accompanied by little Annett to see the ceremony of the bullrush rods. This was a day of rejoicing and they wore their best robes & veils like so many blankets which they

once or twice even threw over their heads. The Altar in which the Commandments are kept was more ornamented than usual &c. but still their dirt is intolerable. The Chaunter sang, I only could distinguish the word *Urusalem*. The whole congregation shouted stopping their ears & appearing to suffer great pain in speaking and shrieking. Another time I heard the Word *Egyptian*, again a Shout, & then the Chaunter ran up & down the musical gammut thro' his nose, in his throat, in short with contortions grimaces &c. &c. beyond telling. Hoanen then (for he is a great Lord) sang some sentence, immediately the congregation shouted, & the Chaunter as if to mimick him (for such was the effect) squeak'd 'ba ba ba ba ba—bee bee bee bee be be be be—bu bu bu bu bu bu bu bu—boi boi boi boi boi boi—buu buu buu *bung, bwung*'. Oh dear, I hope I may be able to sing it whenever I chuse; the more discordant the more *terrific* the better. Poor little Anushka who was at the school for the first time was frighten'd out of her wits. After this the Chaunter, then Hoanen, then the Rabine &c. &c. with bullrush rods & a large yellow fruit in their hands made the round of the Church inside, the Chaunter singing as usual, & so ended the ceremony, but for six days they cannot sleep or live in their Houses. They have accordingly erected little Huts like Stys close to each *without* a roof or nearly; & *without* a boarded floor to imitate the Huts in which they liv'd in Egypt. They do not eat meat at present & for three days from today they must not even *prepare* any but live on fish &c. &c. already dress'd for the occasion. . . .

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> [September]

"I am writing this at 6 o'clock in the Morn<sup>g</sup> just before we bid adieu to Kruglo.

Breakfasted at the Lord Hoanen's with the Ribaupiers, & at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 set forward on our Journey. . . .

26<sup>th</sup> [September. SMOLENSK]

"At 8 o'clock we went to the Governor's to a ball, where a great number of the Nobles of Smolensky were assembled. It was excessively amusing. . . . The Princess open'd the ball with

a polonaise, after w<sup>ch</sup> she resign'd her handsome Cavalier Gen<sup>l</sup> Apraxin to me. We had a great number of country dances & were remarkably lively & pleasant, but I find that there is less of the *fire & fume* of a good education amongst the damsels of Smolensky than amongst the Muscovites who bewilder you to *shew off* their 4 or 5 languages, their musical abilities & their profound knowledge of the great science of dancing. The Smolenskovites are consequently less affected & I am tempted to add *better bred*, as a tincture of diffidence is at least mingled with the *fearless inquisitive* fatiguing manner of half the fair damsels of my acquaintance at Moscow. At supper the Ladys only sat down to table, the Cavaliers wander'd about. The dear princess ask'd for Russ Music for me, & some of the native Music was perform'd by Soldiers. Anna Petrovna could not dance on account of her side, so she amused herself by making me talk Russ to M<sup>dm</sup> K—— whose husband is Governor of Smolensky & so like Miss Campbell (L<sup>y</sup> Lifford's Governess) that I involuntarily drew up my head & sat erect as she has many a time recommended me to do in former Days. The Princess remain'd till  $\frac{1}{2}$  past one & enjoy'd for our sakes the ball which had no other recommendation to her than our amusement.

*Friday 4<sup>th</sup> [October]*

“ We once more stept into the Carriages at an early hour, & passing a Country sometimes pretty sometimes rather barren we at length reach'd Troitska, were rec<sup>d</sup> by half the village & enter'd the Church where the Priest perform'd a tedeum & the Household Gods were kiss'd. The servants then kiss'd the princess's hand & we enter'd the House where greetings salutations & so forth were echo'd by all partys. After dinner we arranged our Apartments and became nearly as if we had not quited Troitska. The same place awakening the same ideas assists a delusion of this nature & makes even a long interval of time appear as the dream of a night. I ought to blush at a reflection which shews me but too plainly that such a dream is almost my life.

*Monday 28<sup>th</sup> [October]*

“ Fine clear cold weather today. The P. went out on a Droszka & I took a walk to see what my little girl (*Mia Devetchka*) was about. This little girl is to come to me the 1<sup>st</sup> of November & the princess promises to *give her to me*, that is she will consign the contract for her Liberty to me to employ if I chuse, so that she may accompany me to England if she pleases. *En attendant* I intend to educate her & make her happy if I can.

*Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> [October]*

“ Sophia & the *promise* (*Nevesta*) Katinka are very busy preparing the Wardrobe of our Bride Elect Katinka in my apartment where I have given them *Shelter* for the purpose. The wedding is to take place at length next Sunday.

. . . . .

*Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ . . . After Supper we sat up later than usual, & no wonder. I don't think I ever saw the dear Princess more charming. She conversed with us on the subject of Religion & express'd so much elevation of mind & such true devotion to her Creator with so much simplicity & energy as was really edifying. 'tis seldom her powers of intellect shew themselves in the delightful manner they have appear'd this Eve<sup>s</sup> for, as she says *too truly*, the business of a mere Steward is her constant employment & absorbs her almost entirely. The goodness of her heart has everlasting practice, but 'tis her lot to leave in repose one of the most richly cultivated understandings that perhaps ever existed, besides a power of Comprehension & a Memory so perfect that Nothing is abstruse to her, & when she conveys her ideas 'tis in a language as simple and clear as it is forcible. . . .<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

*Monday 18<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ My little Pashinka is arriv'd this Eve<sup>s</sup> and the dear princess assures me she is now my *own property* for ever. Poor little soul ; she shall never find that word *property* abused by me. But I accept with pleasure a power which I *may* use to give *her* her liberty or take her to any part of the World where I go if she

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 313.



attaches herself to me. I consider myself now as responsible in some manner for the happiness and prosperity of our fellow creature. Heaven grant I may acquit myself well of this new duty. Pashinka tells me she is turn'd of 11. She does not appear more than 9 years old.

*Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> [November]*

"Pashinka's new cloaths gave her but a momentary pleasure. She tells me it is *Ochin Soushna* (very tiresome & dull) to be here & wishes to return home. I have promis'd to let her go this Eve<sup>g</sup> to see her Mammy. This promise dry'd her tears, & she repeated her alphabet to me.

. . . . .

*Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> [November]*

"Pashinka's tears continue to flow, tho' everyone tries to amuse her. It is really painful to me & I begin to fear that what I flatter'd myself would be a great happiness for her is consider'd as the reverse. . . .

. . . . .

*Monday 25<sup>th</sup> [November]*

"The Princess is better today than she has been for a long time. In rummaging her former Apartment on the 2<sup>d</sup> floor she found a very elegant China Cup & Saucer in its *travelling Case* which she brought down stairs for me with her usual delight at finding something to give me which she thinks will be either useful or agreeable. She has also found a journal written during her travels in England which she read with all the interest that an old friend excites.<sup>1</sup> I wonder whether what I scribble now will give me as much pleasure some years hence !

Poor little Pashet, her tears are so constant that I begin to doubt the *right* I have to keep her, & I will certainly send her back to her Mammy if they continue tho' I know the Princess

<sup>1</sup> Princess Daschkaw made a tour of the British Isles in the years 1777 and 1778. The main object of her visit was to instal her only son in the University of Edinburgh when he studied under the celebrated Principal Dr. Robertson. The journal mentioned here described a visit to the Highlands of Scotland and a copy of it was made by Martha Wilmot. This copy is now in the possession of Martha Wilmot's great-grandniece, Mrs. Evelyn Marindin.

will be extremely displeased if this happens. Her fine Clothes, her Dolls &c. &c. &c. do not recompence her from the loss of a filthy cabin from the heat of which she could run uncontroll'd about the Village in the most piercing season. It is not surprising that strangers cannot supply the want of her Mammy. Anna Petrovna accompanied me to speak to the Mother to find out whether *she* encourag'd the Child, or wish'd to have her back again, in order to act accordingly. We could not gather anything very decisive but a new light appears to me on the subject which would certainly have prevented my taking Pashet had I known it. Far from considering the situation of Lady's Maid advantageous the Russ Peasants usually look upon it as a misfortune to have a child taken to the House of a Noble. M<sup>dle</sup> Islainoff once try'd the experiment on a girl of 16, but daily floods of tears & at length pretended illness oblig'd her to send the girl back who married a poor peasant a year after & to this hour continues to rejoice in any conduct that help'd to release her from such constraint as serving in the *great House*, acknowledging however that her Mistress was the mildest & best that could be found. The Mother of Pashinka is a degree above the lowest Peasants. That is instead of their horn'd head dress she wears a handkerchief & her husband is in the service of the Princess. She does not labour in the field, but is exactly the sort of person that I should suppose would be enchanted to have her Daughter taken care of & treated as she will surely be if she stays with me. She appears contented, but I could not endure the child's continued grieving & therefore I will not try her very long. . . .

Thurs<sup>y</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> [November]

"... Pashinka tells me 'tis less disagreeable than it was.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> [December. Moscow]

"... Our Journey to Moscow was without any occurrence worth remarking. . . . At 6 o'clock we arrived. . . . The House was very warm & comfortable. Prince D. had provided a very elegant Supper. . . .

*Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> [December]*

"... Prince Daschkaw who spent the Eve<sup>s</sup> here told his Mother that yesterday Eve<sup>s</sup> finding his footmen very much intoxicated he thought it necessary to scold one of them whose answer was, ' & how was it possible to do less the Eve<sup>s</sup> y<sup>r</sup> Mother arriv'd ? besides she sent me in a message which was so great an honour that I shou'd have been a *brute* had I remain'd sober ' & do you know, you fool She would have sent you in a 2<sup>d</sup> message if you had not been in this state,' say'd the Prince. ' She would ! Then I confess I have been in the wrong.' The Prince was so touch'd by the poor fellow's attachment to his Mother that he say'd he had not the heart to say a word more, tho' the *manner* of showing it was rather inconvenient.

*Tues<sup>v</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> [December]*

"... I went to the Halidays for a short time, we had some music there. I like Miss Greig<sup>1</sup> extremely. Dr. H. return'd home while I was there & mention'd the most horrid detestable act I ever heard of which happen'd a few days ago to M. de Heitriff. He had a distillery of spirits, & giving some orders perhaps harsh his Peasants rose against him & threw him into the boiling cauldron where the unhappy Man was scalded to death in a few seconds. This execrable act is only a repetition of one of the same kind w<sup>ch</sup> happen'd a few years ago, but many people think it will not be the *last* if the plan of sudden emancipation takes place.

*28<sup>th</sup> [December] Saturday*

" I am slaving at russ & seriously determin'd to learn it. My Master was with me last night, & I am returning to the drudgery of a grammer of nouns, pronouns & verbs. Deuce take the Tower of Babel ! . . .

<sup>1</sup> Eugenie, daughter of Sir Samuel Greig, a Scotsman who became an Admiral in the Russian Navy and reorganised the fleet in the reign of Catherine II. See below, p. 315, note.

Thurs<sup>y</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> [January 1805. N.S.]

"... Soon after dinner the Princess return'd, the young Count Santi came, & she despatched him to a Librarian's on the subject of books. She is preparing for me a most lovely little collection. They arriv'd in half an hour, & I found the dearest affectionate & most kind princess has collected above 100 volumes—Voltaire's Theatre, Diderot's Works, Florian's, Corneille's, Moliere's plays, Delille's works, Œuvres de Grisset &c. &c. &c. 'tis a most charming little library & invaluable as the *Gage d'Amitié* of my beloved princess whose goodness & tenderness is indeed quite unbounded & forms the happiness of my existence at present. . . .

Tues<sup>y</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> [February]

"The Princess din'd at her brother's, Count Alexander de Worontzow's.<sup>1</sup> She has just finish'd a very cleaver spirited satirical reply to an essay on Agriculture which is to be published in the Monthly Journal! Her powers of mind are as clear & as present to her as ever, & I'm told her language in russ is most eloquent and forcible; but writing appears to occupy very little of her attention however serious or deep the subject, & interruptions upon interruptions don't change the flow of her ideas which continue their course however different the conversation or business which suspends them for a time. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Count Alexander Romanovich Woronzow (1741-1805), Russian Imperial Chancellor and elder brother of Princess Daschkaw. During the short reign of Peter III he served as Ambassador to England, and under Catherine II he was a senator, and till 1791 President of the Department of Trade. In 1801 he was recalled to office by Alexander I and appointed Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Though only Chancellor for a few years he exercised great influence in public affairs. Like the rest of the Woronzows he advocated a close union with Great Britain and Austria rather than friendship with France, and he was the direct cause of the rupture with Napoleon in 1803. His death removed the strongest Anglophil in the Ministry, and helped to produce a Franco-Russian *rapprochement* and consequently war with England. He was Princess Daschkaw's favourite brother, and they carried on an uninterrupted correspondence for over forty years. Princess Daschkaw's letters to him, together with his autobiography in French (*Notice sur ma Vie*), are in the Woronzow archives. See *Archiv Vorontsov*, vol. v (Moscow, 1872), *passim*. He died unmarried.

## To HER SISTER ALICIA

MOSCOW. *March 9<sup>th</sup> N.S. 1805*

“ What has been occupying me a good deal lately is a Mr<sup>s</sup> Reed who I shall introduce to you as we are sort of Cronys. Her appearance is short and very large, but her face must have been lovely. But her Story ! It chills one’s blood to think of it. Her Husband had been appointed professor at the Academy here after having been English Clergyman for 13 years at Cronstadt. In short He died suddenly on the road, and from a complication of circumstances too long to detail she found herself amidst the agony of her grief liable to Suspicion of causing his death ; was recommended to conceal it, and while the unhappy Man was placed Dead in a baggage Carriage, was She oblig’d to dress up his Great Coat and covering a sort of figure with it and his fur cap to make it pass as her Husband entering the Gates &c. &c. &c. At length she arrived at Moscow, and at the University she rush’d up Stairs like a Mad person, and when ask’d by the Governor’s Wife ‘ But my dear Madam, why are you alone ? Where is Mr Reed ? ’ the wretched being woke from her stupor and wildly answer’d, ‘ He is Dead and lying at your Gate a Corps ’. The people of the House shew’d her a great deal of humanity, and when I first saw her she had recover’d her tranquility most astonishingly. Her plan is to get establish’d in some family as Governess, but she has two children ; one a sweet interesting looking Girl of 15, the other a fine child of nine. In the mean time she inhabits a small lodging close to us and I see her frequently. The Princess has shewn her uncommon kindness and generosity. She sent her children 500 roubles, and some unknown person sent a like sum. I fear she will have occasion to spend it all before she gets establish’d as she will not separate from her children, and Nobody seems inclin’d to take them *all*. The Princess invites her to spend the month of May at Troitskow if she is not establish’d before that period. But what think you of *my* writing to the Emperour of all the Russias ? I have written and Princess Daschkaw approved, revised, and corrected the letter which *She* copied. Our Hope is that *his* benevolence will grant a pension to the unfortunate Woman.

TROITSKA 17<sup>th</sup> of March 1805

“ There’s a jump for you ! Yes here we are once more as if nothing had happen’d. Ah no, for my beloved Princess’s health has given me a great deal of uneasiness lately. The Princess is better now, and I must enliven myself by detailing the misfortunes of our journey. But you ought to be aware of what Russia is in the spring and autumn when the roads begin to break up ; in spring ’tis the melting of the snow ! 40, 50 or 60 foot of frozen snow begins to thaw, so you may imagine the consequence ! Well the Princess fix’d her day. ’twas the Blessed Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March at 2 o’clock *before sun rise*. But the weather (to punish us for a journey begun on such a day) came on so hazy and so rainy that the Streets were deluged and our Coach bump’d from Hill to Valley on the heavy sledge. However we got into the open country about 2 or 3 versts forward, driving, rolling, tumbling, thumping, bumping, whacking, tacking, and all, almost without a trackway except those form’d by the caprice of the little dirty Carts. Suddenly the Horses rear’d, plung’d and soused us one and all into a quagmire. In truth my dear Alicia you may compose your perturbed spirit, for I cannot release you from said quagmire for a page and a half, for in it we struggled to the music of Moscow’s Cathedral Bells for five times as long.

Well, I have rested from the fatigues of reflection, so am come to help you out. Don’t imagine however that we were bedevil’d with wet and dirt ourselves. No such thing. On the contrary it was the *quietest* part of the journey. We sat still and saw the poor servants with poles like Ships’ Masts poking at the carriage to raise it, but ineffectually except that now and then a great heave wou’d raise it a little and *smack* it would fall again raising a downright whirlwind with foam of snow, ice, rain, mud &c. &c. to shew us what force had been employ’d. Thus situated the Bright Aurora slowly undrew the Curtains of the East. Her Crowding Nymphs clad in Grey, the Moments, the Gentle Minutes and one of the Rosy Hours appear’d in her train. From our new Element we dar’d to invoke Her aid, and from our Quagmire utter’d complaints so touching that she was at length mov’d to pity. A detachment of her Votarys (those swains who love to wander by Moonlight and wait her first appearance before

they enter a town with the rich tribute of Eggs, Beef, Soap, Butter, fish, fowls and odoriferous Tallow) came to our succour, and the loud shouts of Hura as we had proclaim'd our Victory e'er Sol and his satirical companions had time to witness our disgrace. The remainder of the Journey was as *unquiet* as anything cou'd well be, but at length we arrived and here we are, my dear Alicia, safe and well at your service.

The last week of our stay at Moscow a young English Nobleman was the *Lion* of the place, Lord Burghersh son to the Earl of Westmoreland who was once Lord Lieu<sup>t</sup> of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> He is a fine manly upright brave fellow slaying by thousands the Princesses of the North—six foot and a half high. What more shall I say? I have seen him but three times to speak to and most probably shall see him again so did not think it worth while falling in Love. He was singularly contrasted by a little atom of a man call'd George Mostyn, an Indian educated in England, dark of Nature and Grave by Art for he affects singularity to spoil an agreeable nature which is seen thro' and makes him ridiculous. He had travelled everywhere, is full of knowledge but does not unpack it agreeably because he talks too much and does not know how to listen. Have I ever mention'd him before? I like him very well notwithstanding what I have say'd—and he likes me too, Miss Alicia, because after settling it as an *incontrovertible* fact that no English person cou'd sing, except in one way and that most detestably, the 29<sup>th</sup> time he had been in my company he heard me by accident Chaunt Moore's little song 'Ah why shou'd the Girl of my Soul be in tears,' and happening to like it he reflected that likeing on Me and from that event cultivated my acquaintance. Such is George Mostyn, and I think *that* alone *may* give you an idea of him. He has been amongst the Turks and has pick'd up a great deal of their Exterior. The worst of him is that he keeps one so constantly in *full chase* to overtake his volubility that if it ceases a moment one pants to draw breath, and before you have time to consider who and what he

<sup>1</sup> John (Fane), Lord Burghersh, later 11th Earl of Westmorland (1784-1859), soldier, diplomatist, author and musician. Fought under Wellington in the Peninsular War and War of Liberation and published accounts of these campaigns. Was afterwards British Minister at Berlin and Vienna. Founded the Royal Academy of Music in 1823. He married in 1811 a daughter of the 3rd Earl of Mornington, the Hon. Priscilla Wellesley-Pole, who became a distinguished portrait painter.

is away he goes again and away you go after helter skelter without having time to repose on a single point of character.

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Wed. 23<sup>rd</sup> [March]*

" I have beg'd to be appointed by the Princess Governess to the Beggars' Hospital and am invested in my office.

*Thurs<sup>v</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> [March]*

" . . . I visited the poor people yesterday. They are a wretched specimen of old age & poverty, rapacious yet I believe incapable of enjoying much comfort. The Princess has order'd an Arm Chair & some other conveniences to be made for them. . . .

•

*Monday 30<sup>th</sup> [March]*

" Still very cold, however I walk'd out & visited the Hospital. It appears to me that the few souls who take refuge there have so few wants that they are incapable of enjoying any thing beyond food, warmth & repose. I found more than half the number asleep on the top of the stove. A blind woman is the only one who attempts needlework or knitting &c. and the Cook of the Society is *more than half a fool*. These two are however the only useful members of the Community. There is an old Man & an old Woman who never fail to squabble when they are not sleeping, and the remainder are Nonentitys. Such is my young family (as the Princess calls them !)

*Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> [March]*

" This Eve<sup>g</sup> Nastasia finish'd a blue satin cushion which the Princess contriv'd & arranged herself for the case which she has given me to put my pomps and vanities into. She says her affection for me inspires her with talents she never had before, & indeed it is true, for her own adornments &c never I believe occupied 2 minutes of her thoughts. How flattering to my heart are such expressions from her who *never* yet disguised a movement of hers. *A propos* of ornaments at Moscow a Lady had *hired* a solitaire to adorn her daughter worth 40,000 Roubles. She went to a friend's



House where she could not resist exhibiting her treasure. Every child wish'd to have a peep. In short the ring was lost, and the young lady's marriage portion could hardly repurchase it.

*Thurs<sup>v</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> [April]*

"... The Princess rummaged her treasures today & gave me a magnificent snuff box of gold. The Empress Katherine's likeness is most perfectly represented in profil at one side & at the other the Coronation or rather the famous 28<sup>th</sup> of June when she was chosen with emblematical figures &c. &c. She gave me likewise several Medallions & Coins & Siberian Stones &c. &c.

Conversing today she happen'd to mention that the Calmucks when they go to war stop for no *trifles*. For example if provisions fall short they bleed their Horses & sustain themselves by drinking the blood they have drawn. Should any plunder fall in their way and that after killing an animal they have not time to dress it, they cut up Slices of it & fastening one or two on the saddle *bake it* in that manner, & if they survive the combat they eat it after the action.

*Friday 5<sup>th</sup> [April]*

"... Sophia has been asking pardon from everyone before Confession. By the by should even the Imperial family prepare for receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper they must first turn to the Congregation as if to ask whether they are all in peace & Charity with them.

. . . . .

*Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> [April]*

"... I rec<sup>d</sup> a note from Major Thompson today announcing the loss of a parcel with which I had entrusted him to take to Eng<sup>d</sup>. This is a great disappointment both to the dear kind Princess & to me as it contain'd some Sherbet Cups in silver stands which she had sent to my Father besides various other trifles. The poor man has lost a considerable sum of money & almost all his wardrobe, *so* I must console myself as I have only lost superfluities.

*Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> [April]*

"In the Eve<sup>g</sup> we had a gathering of Nastasia's acquaintances & the old Russian amusements such as National songs, & as they are sung by almost all the Company who move in a large Circle, 2 are placed in the centre & act the little Story that is told. The Princess tells me that in the Empress Katherine's time those amusements were very often at the Hermitage & the E. knew all the old National storys, traditions, dances, plays &c. &c. &c. and encouraged everything of the kind most excessively which made her of course extremely popular.

After supper the Princess sat down to the Pianoforte, & in a few minutes composed a very elegant little air which I wrote down immediately.

. . . . .

*Thurs<sup>y</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> [April]*

"... This Eve<sup>g</sup> the P. mention'd that 150 Roubles is a very common price for a *fine* Sturgeon. The lesser ones are of course much cheaper.

. . . . .

*Tues<sup>y</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> [May]*

"The Weather is lovely. I went with the P. for the first time this year on her Droshka to a village at a little distance & saw Troitskoi to great advantage from it. The P. fatigued herself most dreadfully, as she generally would do were it not for her uncommon strength which enables her to undertake *Mason's* work when she visits the builders, gardener's work when she visits the garden &c. &c. &c. &c.

After supper something introduced the subject of Diderot & other french authors with whom she was personally acquainted. As a genius she consider'd Voltaire inferior to Diderot or to Hubert whose universal talents made his society so precious. 'twas Hubert who painted the best likeness of Voltaire that ever was taken.<sup>1</sup> It was *He* who Voltaire dreaded for the wit &

<sup>1</sup> Jean Huber (1721-1786), Swiss painter and naturalist. He was a prominent member of Voltaire's coterie at Ferney and distinguished himself by his *Observations sur le vol des Oiseaux* (Geneva, 1784), which must rank as one of the first works on aeronautics.

satire of his conversation, & He also it was who after taking a peice of cheese call'd a favorite Dog, order'd him to open his mouth, & after turning the cheese a few times over & under the Dog's tongue could produce so perfect a caricature of Voltaire that the latter could not endure it & rarely was seen in the society of Hubert when he could avoid it. The P. never saw Rousseau. She had too much contempt for him to flatter his vanity by such homage. She mention'd that a German Baron wrote to Rousseau to inform him he had educated his only son according to the plan of Emilius & that the result was the young man's becoming so great a scapegrace that the wretched Father had very narrowly saved him from the Gallows. J. J. Rousseau's reply was 'I *did* suppose there would be many fools who would read my book, but little thought that one existed who was mad enough to practice its precepts'. He retired to Paris in poverty as he say'd to Live *unnotic'd*, & when arriv'd there frequented a particular Coffee House dress'd as an Armenien, playing Chess, attracting idle crowds & gratifying his insatiable vanity.

Diderot after reading in manuscript an essay which Rousseau had just finish'd fill'd with the most noble sentiments & clothed in his usual eloquent language told him it was perfect, & then express'd a sort of wish to see the same subject treated with *opposite views* (or rather a doubt that it could be equally well written upon the opposite side of the question). Rousseau threw his essay into the fire, & preferring the more vicious side soon gave it by his magic pen a still more attractive charm than the first had possess'd. Perhaps these little circumstances are in his *Confessions*, but I never read that extraordinary book. I sometimes love to recall the moments that the Princess gives to such sorts of conversation which are too rare to satisfy my wish of hearing her. Diderot was a first rate favorite of Princess Daschkaw's.<sup>1</sup> . . .

*Friday 10<sup>th</sup> [May]*

" . . . The poor old Man at the Beggars' Hospital is dying, & the people there say before his face, ' Oh my dear 'tis time for him to

<sup>1</sup> See *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, i, 162-171 for her account of their association in Paris. A number of Diderot's letters to the Princess were printed by the editor in *Memoirs*, ii, 160-176.

go, he is very old ! ' He says he is near 100. I took them a large supply of Fish. The Princess distributed a great quantity this Eve<sup>s</sup> which were found in the pools of water that still remain in the Meadow after the overflow of the river.

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> [June]

"... I have begun to copy Princess D.'s Memoires. This Eve<sup>s</sup> the P. mention'd one or 2 circumstances of the Prince Anhalt Serbst, the Empress Katherine's brother, which prove that most of the *judgement & sound* understanding of the family fell to her share. When Maria Theresa congratulated him on his sister's accession to the Empire of Russia, his courtly answer was, ' faith Madam petticoat government is seldom good for much, nor does it often *last long* ', & this to the Empress of Germany, who united the dominion of so many Principalitys Kingdoms &c in her own person ! On Katherine Ye<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>'s Accession to the Emp. of R. she invited her brother to resign his appointments in the German service & to accept the same ranks with trebble the income in that of Russia. He wrote her word to mind her own affairs & leave him to settle his, & He never came to the Court of S<sup>t</sup> Petersbourg. At length however he quitted the Imperial Army of Maria Theresa, & the reasons he assign'd for doing so were that the facings of his Soldiers' Regimentals were changed, tho' they had fought bravely in the Colour they had had at first, & that the most Impertinent Monkey of the most impertinent Master breathing (a Gen<sup>l</sup> in Chief) had presumed to bite him, & such conduct was not to be borne. This he wrote to his cousin Prince Anhalt, & P.D. saw the letter. He added that he had no doubt his Cousin w<sup>d</sup> also resign his Commission when he heard of the treatment He had rec<sup>d</sup>.

Sat. 8<sup>th</sup> [June]

" 5 letters from Home containing the happy intelligence that my Sister *will* indeed come.

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> [June]

“ . . . Arriv’d Count Rostopchin, M<sup>me</sup> Nebalsin & M<sup>lle</sup> Lilint-hall. Count R. is the very image of Paul 1<sup>st</sup> and now more than ever as he is grown thin & looks ill. We sat up late, the Conversation turning on different events, of Russian history. The P. spoke of the visit which the Empress K. had made to the unhappy young Ivan.<sup>1</sup> She mention’d to her *herself* that Ivan was mad, or rather foolish. The origin of his derangement is truly pitiable. A young Lieu<sup>t</sup> who was often on guard at his prison door taught him secretly to write. Ivan traced with a fork on the pewter plate on which his food was presented to him ‘ The unfortunate Emperour Ivan ’ with the date &c ; & springing like a cat (which agility he had acquired by the never to be extinguish’d love of Liberty that made him anxious even to see the outside of his Dreary prison) up to a little opening which admitted the light, he threw it out. God knows whether in the extreme debasement & ignorance in which from his infancy he was kept he could form a plan, but the plate was pick’d up, taken to Court, shewn to the Empress Elizabeth and *She* considering him a child order’d him to be whypt. He was so & lost his reason. At the time Kath. saw him he spoke incessantly of the *little Emperour* Ivan and of himself as *two* persons. The unhappy Catastrophe which depriv’d him of his miserable existence was near being of serious consequence to Princess D. She had allow’d her uncle the Count Panin to occupy a part of her House, & amongst other people who came to him on business was Mirowich who had formerly been a Subaltern in his Reg<sup>t</sup>. When his foolish plan for establishing Ivan on the Throne fail’d & that the Commanding Officer on duty murder’d him to save a Rebellion authoriz’d to do so by an order given during the Reign of Eliz<sup>th</sup> that in case of the Prison being forced open &c. &c.

<sup>1</sup> Ivan VI (1740-1764), Czar of Russia. Succeeded his great-aunt Anne as Czar when only eight weeks old, was dethroned and imprisoned as the result of Elizabeth’s *coup d’état* a year later. Solitary confinement extending for over twenty years disturbed his mental equilibrium, though he does not appear actually to have been mad. He was known to be aware of his identity and secret instructions were given to his gaolers by Elizabeth that he was to be killed in the event of any attempt to rescue him from outside. An officer in the garrison named Mirovich formed a wild plan for freeing him and proclaiming him Emperor, and on its failure in 1764 Ivan was accordingly put to death.

he should be put to death, the Orloffs told the Empress that Mirowich had been seen several times quitting P. D.'s House. The Empress express'd some surprise, but Count Panin<sup>1</sup> who was in the suite of Kath. explain'd the affair.

TO HER MOTHER & HER SISTER ALICIA

TROITSKOI July 13<sup>th</sup> N.S. 1805

"I am sorry to say I have no other reason for writing to you than the pleasure of doing so, as I have not a single letter to answer except from Kitty which I shall reply to to St Petersburg. We are anxiously waiting to hear the probable time of her arrival. A few days ago my beloved Princess sent off to Moscow a tremendous trunk containing various Silks, Satins, Russ napkins &c. &c. &c. to greet her.

I bathe every day in the river as does *la belle* Sophia and Pashinka. We have likewise another bathing woman who swims like a Fish; so does Pashinka, and almost without exception all the lower orders of women in Russia. This will be a pleasure to Kitty who used to glory in a morning plunge, and we are in the river generally before eight o'clock. My bathing woman Irene is excessively like M<sup>iss</sup> Shaw and swims across the river without the slightest fear or danger, so you may judge of her tallents as well as of her figure and face.

Troitskoi is now in its highest beauty. In one part of the Grounds there is a little Chinese Temple, and before it a field of roses which is now in full bloom and fragrant beyond expression. The field contains nothing but roses. One arrives at it suddenly from woods and walks quite in a different style and taste so that the contrast is uncommonly striking and pretty. I often sit in the lattice work arbour (for Temple is rather too grand a name for it) but am obliged to Guard my face with a *Zinzalière* against the swarms of Gnats and Wasps. A *Zinzalière* is made of a very light Italian Gauze expressly for the purpose of keeping off the Zin

<sup>1</sup> Count Nikita Panin (1718-1783). Was largely responsible for the successful direction of Catherine II's foreign policy till his dismissal in 1781. Reputed to be one of the most accomplished and liberal statesmen of his day. Princess Daschkaw's enemies wrongly supposed her to be his mistress.

Zin Zin flies. Under a Canopy of such Gauze do I repose every night and find it serve the purpose most compleatly, for last year I suffer'd dreadfully from those hateful insects, and thanks to my *Zinzalière* I have not been blister'd on my face this year. But alas e'er you read this letter 'tis most probable that our fleeting summer will be past and gone. Do you know that fine weather, or rather *warm* weather, is become so great a blessing to me that I actually sit *open mouth'd* to inhale it and *open eyed* to look at every moment as it passes for fear of losing it unobserv'd. I wonder how Kitty will feel in the midst of the first 30 degrees of cold she feels. . . .

I told you in some of my late letters that my beloved Princess was not well, but let me then hasten to give you the welcome account of her being now better than she has been for months, and the idea of seeing Kitty appears to give her by anticipation a degree of pleasure little short of my own. . . .

Here comes Sophia to ask forgiveness of all the sins voluntary or involuntary she may have committed against Me. (The same ceremony is to take place to every one in the House.) She is going to Confess and receive not *altogether* Absolution from the Priest but very nearly the same thing for an entire year. I believe the great difference between the Greek and Roman Catholic church on that is that one gives it by Papal authority and the other after a great deal of exhortation gives you to understand that repentant sinners are always accepted. In fact the Priestly power is great beyond expression in both. . . .

24<sup>th</sup> [July]

"... There is a Small Meadow opposite to my Windows in which 150 Mowers are mowing this moment, Men & Women. All the Men are clothed in white linnen Jacket & trowsers (no that's a fib, white trowsers & a Shirt border'd at bottom with the scarlet work of the Peasants & likewise on the Shoulders, girdled round the waist with a gaudy girdle). The effect is excessively picturesque, and those who imagine the Russ peasantry sunk in sloth & misery imagine a strange falsehood. Wou'd to God our Paddys (dear Spalpines & Broaganeers that they are, for on my *oath* I doat down upon them) were half as well clothed or fed the year round as are the Russians. There is *for* & *against* in

every state, but take the two Nations to Robt's touchstones, 'Have they enough to eat, to drink?' 'Have they Houses, firing & a bed to lie on?' and trust me the *Bears* would triumph, oh beyond comparison. If they are *Slaves* 'tis likewise the Master's interest to treat them kindly. His population constitutes his riches, & he who neglects or oppresses his subjects becomes their victim & sinks himself. Those indeed who class with Servants are different there. A Master's caprice comes in contact with every act of his Domestics, and as they *cannot be discharg'd* corporal punishment must be sometimes inflicted. Oh Zandy, there's what we Islanders cannot even bear to think of. Yet to sum up all in one word, the greatest punishment that can be inflicted is to be 'given for a Soldier'. 'tis probable therefore that the former situation could not be *very* miserable, & *on ne peut desirer ce qu'on ne connoît pas*. . . .

From HER JOURNAL

30<sup>th</sup> [July]

"... M. Posnicoff told me that he had seen the person who was *present* at the unlocking of the infernal Iron Carriage with 2 prisoners enclosed which Paul 1<sup>st</sup> sent to Siberia &c. &c.<sup>1</sup> The miserable being whose companion died & whose corps was still chain'd to him, whose constant prayer to his keepers when they brought him his food was, 'Either kill me for pity sake, or remove this dead body from my side,' ceased at last to complain after 8 days of suffering such as even imagination can scarcely conceive, & when the cell was unlock'd he too had ceased to exist, a prey to the *pestilence* of his companion.

. . . . .

9<sup>th</sup> [August]

"... I rec<sup>d</sup> a letter from my dearest K. & one from Harriet written from her lodgings in Pall Mall to mention Kate's intention of sailing on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July. In consequence the dear kind princess arrang'd to send off Jerkoff tomorrow to escort her to Moscow.

. . . . .

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 51.



Monday 11<sup>th</sup> [August]

"... Something recall'd to Princess Daschkaw's recollection the little Chinese anecdote I am going to mention. One knows so little of those Churlish Gentry at the other side of their Wall. In the reign of the Empress Anne her Majesty sent a sort of Ambassador to open a diplomatic intercourse between the 2 Courts. The Emperour of China constantly refused to see the Russian envoy or receive his Letters. At length however during an airing or some excursion into the country the letter was rec<sup>d</sup> & read by His Imperial Majesty, the envoy treated politely and dismiss'd. Return'd to Moscow he had not much to boast of ; however the Empress willing to carry her point, caus'd a pompous display of thanks &c. &c. for the honours confer'd on her Messenger to be convey'd to China. The Emperour's reply was, ' You are very droll, you owe us no thanks. Are you ignorant that when we ride abroad every Beggar is at liberty to look at us and to present a paper ? ' Princess D. found this anecdote amongst a variety of old records which her uncle the Grand Chancellor<sup>1</sup> allow'd her to read, knowing her passion even when a child for such researches.

Tues<sup>y</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> [August]

"... 'tis remarkable that when a person sells an estate in Russia the nearest relation of him who sells has a *right* to repurchase it from the Person to whom it has been sold & who cannot

<sup>1</sup> Count Michael Ilarionovich Woronzow (1714-1767), Russian Imperial Chancellor and uncle of Princess Daschkaw who was brought up in his household. Was the first member of the Woronzow family to become prominent in public affairs. Became Chamberlain and Land Steward to Empress Elizabeth, whom he assisted in the *coup d'état* by which she mounted the throne in 1741. Created Count and Vice-Chancellor in 1744 and superseded Bestuzhev as Chancellor in 1758, continuing in office during the brief reign of Peter III. Though timorous and irresolute in politics he did not lack personal courage, and after the Revolution of 1762 he is said to have endured torture rather than betray his late Sovereign. Resigned on Catherine II's elevation of Panin in 1763. Strongly interested in literature and antiquities and possessed a magnificent collection of curios. He married in 1742 the Empress Elizabeth's cousin and crony Anna Skavronsky who almost reduced him to financial ruin through her extravagance. Their only daughter Anna married Count Alexander Stroganoff, father of Czar Alexander I's celebrated Minister Paul Stroganoff. His correspondence in Russian and French has been published from the Woronzow archives. See *Archiv Vorontsov*, vols. i-vii (Moscow, 1870-1875), *passim*.

refuse to resign it at the price *He* gave with some slight interest for the purchaser's Money as a compensation for its unprofitable expenditure. If the nearest relation does not chuse to avail himself of this right he may yield to the next &c, and this continues for *two* years after w<sup>ch</sup> the law confirms the purchase to him who made it without further danger of any kind.

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> [August]

" Heaven be praised, Kitty is arriv'd at Cronstadt. I rec<sup>d</sup> the news from M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh this Eve<sup>g</sup>. Oh the extacy I am in to think that her tremendous Voyage is over and that I shall soon see her.

Thurs<sup>v</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> [August]

" A letter from dearest Kate herself written in the Gulph of Finland with a PS. from Cronstadt. How thankful am I to Heaven for her safe arrival after all the horror & danger of the Ocean. She came in the same ship I did, follow'd my footsteps to Hamlet's Garden at Elsineur &c. &c. &c. &c. . . .

Tues<sup>v</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> [August]

" . . . A little Kosack was made a present to the Princess some years ago. The Child was very pretty & engaging ; the Princess had him dress'd elegantly & the Child was quite charm'd with his fine Clothes. One day she ask'd him whether he loved her & was happy. He say'd 'Yes'. She ask'd him whether he would quit her. He fired up instantly & say'd 'Oh yes'. 'What,' say'd the Princess, 'You love me & are happy & yet you will go away from me!' 'tis because I left my poor Mammy in the Woods.' 'Well but what could you do to help her? You are too little to be of any use!' 'No, for my Daddy is gone away, & when my Mammy cries *I help her to cry.*' The P. was really affected by his answer, but alas the excursion in which he was taken prisoner seperated him forever from his poor Mammy.

. . . . .

Sat. 23<sup>rd</sup> [August]

" Rec<sup>d</sup> a letter from K. by which I find I *ought* to have had one on Wednesday. 'tis probable the servant by whom she sent it to

the Post Office spent the money of its postage on Whyskey & destroy'd the letter, this being a common practice it seems. Nothing is fix'd for her Journey, & yet we are to set out to meet her at Moscow on Wednesday. . . .

*Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> [August. Moscow]*

“ Up very early to go to the Cathedral in the Kremlin & see a Bishop consecrated. . . .

We din'd at Prince Daschkaw's, whose new House is extremely light, elegant, & yet comfortable. Even<sup>g</sup> *à la Maison*. Prince D. presented Mr Coxe<sup>1</sup> to our acquaintance. His intimacy with the dear Wilmots of B[ruce] Castle<sup>2</sup> made him very interesting to me before I saw him, but then I was rather disappointed I own as the dignity of a Clergyman of sixty is absolutely unknown to him at least in his manners.

*{ Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> [September]*

“ My precious Kate is arriv'd. Oh my God, indeed excessive joy is a painful thing. K. seeing that there was company here flew up to my room, and one of the servants (Timothy) beckon'd me from the room where I was to tell me the joyful news. I flew & found her greatly agitated. 'tis two days now since her arrival & I really feel more real bliss in having her than at meeting her, for I was in an agony of joy at first & my Darling K. was still worse. We came down to the dearest Princess who came into another

<sup>1</sup> William Coxe (1747-1828), historian and Archdeacon of Wiltshire. Shortly after coming down from Cambridge he became travelling tutor to Lord Herbert (later 11th Earl of Pembroke and husband of Countess Catherine Woronzow, daughter of Count Simon Woronzow), and in this capacity accompanied him to Switzerland, where he wrote a description of the country which founded his literary reputation. Though an inveterate traveller and conscientious archivist he was at best a dull writer. Besides biographies of Marlborough, the Walpoles, Pelham, and Gay he wrote several accounts of his travels, which, together with his *Memoirs of the House of Austria* and *Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain*, still rank as authorities in their sphere. His voluminous correspondence and papers, which cover his visits to Russia, are preserved in the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> The family of John Eardley Wilmot. See above, p. 9, note.

room as K. would not face Strangers. Never shall I forget the lovely affection of the Princess, dearest kindest of Women ! Prince D. likewise came to wellcome her, & Anna Petrovna was highly charmed also and came to tell her so. We then rush'd into the air & continued walking by bright moonlight till call'd to supper which was serv'd for us in our room. The Princess came as soon as supper was over & she had dismiss'd her guests, & remain'd with us till past one o'clock conversing, after which Kate & I sat up till the blazing Sun rose upon our Vigil & shamed me for allowing her after 8 sleepless nights & all the various fatigues of a Journey from St Petersburg to Moscow to sit up in such a manner. At length Sleep closed her eyes, & I began to read some letters from home. However after going to see that she *really* was in the very next room to me & that it was no vision or dream I too fell fast asleep & woke in an extacy the next Morn<sup>g</sup> almost doubting my own Senses.

Thurs<sup>d</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> [September]

"Up at Cock Crow to drive to Sparrow Mount from which spot Moscow is seen as a Panorama, & a most exquisite view it is indeed. The seven hundred Churches or Convents with their gilded Spires & domes, the variety of their forms, the groves of high trees which are in the town, its being built on a Hilly Spot & above all the Kremlin, that Town wall'd round in the Center of the town, produce an effect so unique that Kate who has lately been visiting every part of the Continent was delighted with it, & for my part I really was enchanted. Besides, the sunshine of the day & the sunshine of happiness at my darling Kate's being with me certainly brighten'd my heart & soul & made the beauty before my eyes at least *more agreeable* & more impressive. At the foot of Sparrow hill is a green plain of considerable extent which forms a sort of contrast which adds dignity to the *Coup d'œil* & relieves (I mean throws out) the other objects. The river skirts this plain & as we saw it look'd as if it encircled the Town, but that is not the case for it passes thro' the middle & even flows at the foot of the Kremlin. We had with us a Police Officer on his Droshka, a Cavaliere Servante. K. & Anna Petrovna had a great laugh against me on his account, first because he happen'd to

give me his arm going up the hill, but still more when on his offering to shew us a Bear's Chase A. Petrovna heard me answer in Russ by a most caressing tho' commonplace expression & then saw him kiss my hand. In short they made their own amusement but I obtain'd the *Chase* for them, & I was almost griev'd at having done so, tho' one likes to see any natural amusement. This was horrid. One of the tremendous Dogs which were kept chain'd was let loose & fell upon unhappy Bruin who was *chain'd* & also appear'd to make a manner of resistance while the furious Dog fasten'd his teeth in his neck. We instantly shriek'd out to stop & seperate them, & hasten'd from so detestable amusement which like Bull baiting & Cock fighting is a cruel remnant of barbarism & will I trust be soon exploded.

Returning we visited the institution of Prince Gallitzen for the sick & likewise the Foundling Hospital. We likewise stop'd at the Kremlin, & walking thro' its handsome buildings &c. &c. we look'd at the *tremendous Cannon* which is there & likewise peep'd into the deep dungeon which conceals the great Cathedral Bell, the size of which much exceeded my expectations. By its own weight it is sinking deeper & deeper into the Earth, & I much fear that the thought of rescuing it from its present *humiliating* situation strikes nobody.<sup>1</sup> The place is cover'd over with boards, a few of which can be removed to gratify Curiosity, & that's the state in which it now lies. . . .

*Thurs<sup>y</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> October [TROITSKOE]*

" Our lives are so uniform that I have nothing to write. We walk every day, & this day is the first that has a real wintry appearance for it is snowing fast & very cold. . . . The Evening's occupation is reading out the copy of the Princess's History & comparing it with the original which is a very disagreeable way of

<sup>1</sup> The King of Bells (Tsar Kolokol) is the largest bell in the world, measuring 19 feet in height and weighing nearly 200 tons. It was recast from an old bell by the Moscow bell-founder Motorin in 1735, and its surface was decorated with bas-reliefs by Rastrelli. It fell from its temporary position during the fire of 1737 and became partly buried in the ground. At the same time the piece which can still be seen beside it broke off. In 1836 the bell was dug out and placed on its present pedestal.

reading it but necessary.<sup>1</sup> I have not yet finished reading K's journal for the dear Princess, tho' I go thro' a few pages almost every day.<sup>2</sup> . . .

To HER MOTHER

TROITSKOE. 13<sup>th</sup> October 1805

" . . . dearest K is at present a little unwell. I take for granted 'tis the change of climate as her *feels* are what I had, but with this difference that my sturdy constitution took a longer time to yield to the usual attack of new air &c. &c. While I write Kate is in a profound slumber & I trust that Sleep may act as Medicine & throw off a Malady that is one of the most disagreeable in the World, being that of languor & weakness arising from disgust to all eatables & loss of appetite. This together with a constant drowsiness is the complaint, & without making any Great Shew I think I would for myself compound to take a good *Spanking* fever in exchange for it, so wearing down to mind & body is it ; for her I judge otherwise, & since I look upon it to be an ordeal thro' which every Stranger must pass I trust that hers will only be over sooner than other people's & that by the time you are reading this letter we may be thinking of figuring off to Moscow to flourish for a while amongst the Natives. . . .

17<sup>th</sup> [October]

" See what a length of time has elapsed since I began this letter. Dearest Mam within the time K. has been as *busy as a Bee* breeding the Yellow Jaundice which has most compleatly shewn itself to be such by answering every one of Buchan's symptoms, & now that no doubt remains upon *that* point everything is thank God going on in the most prosperous manner, & she is already decidedly better. I cannot tell you how much little Eleanor<sup>3</sup> has delighted

<sup>1</sup> See *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, i, 35-39.

<sup>2</sup> *An Irish Peer on the Continent (1801-1803). Being a narrative of the tour of Stephen, 2nd Earl Mount Cashell, through France, Italy, etc., as related by Catherine Wilmot.* Edited by Thomas U. Sadleir, London, 1920.

<sup>3</sup> Eleanor Cavanagh, Catherine Wilmot's maid, who accompanied her mistress from Cork.

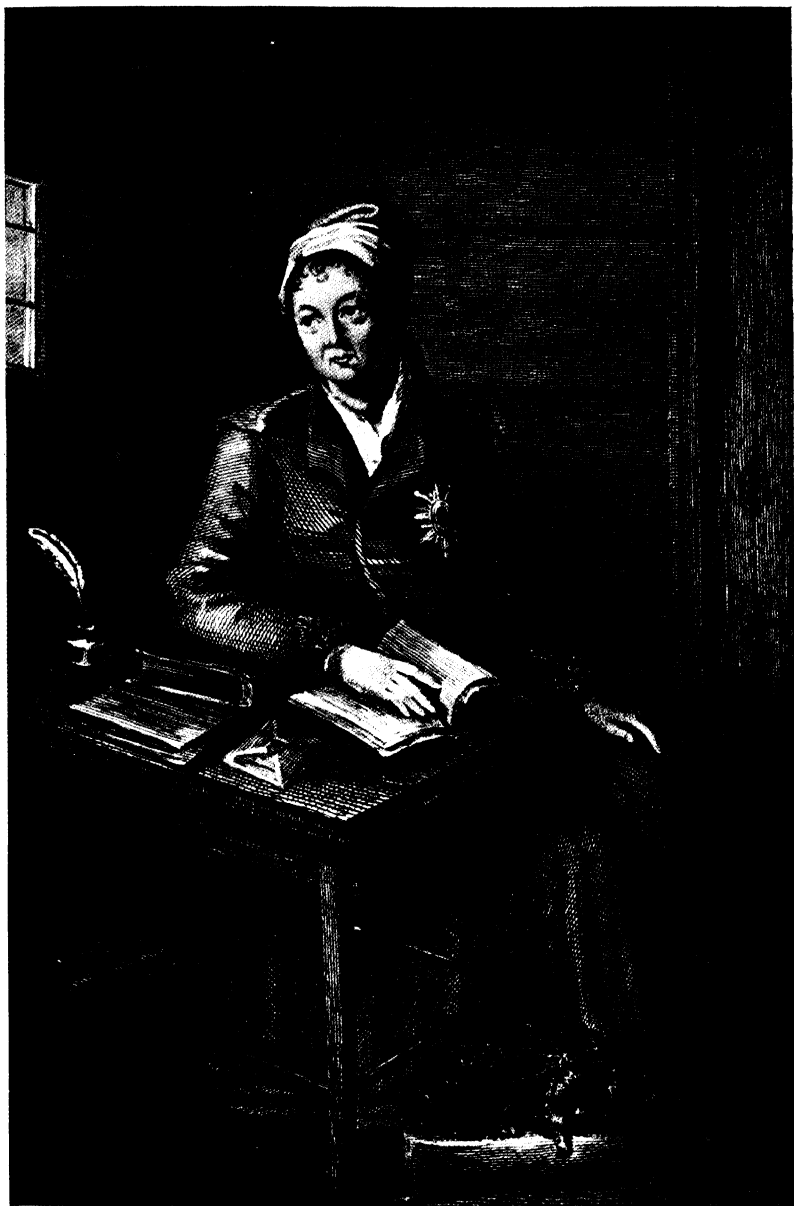
me by her readiness, attention, affection &c. &c. She was the *first* to suspect it as she say'd her little brother had had the Jaundice lately. Kate does not come downstairs so that our pretty little dressing room is the Eve's rendezvous and the dearest Princess & Anna Petrovna drink tea with the Invalid & stay till Supper time every Eve's, but Our *Orgies* will soon be over if she goes on at this rate for she is a *bright yellow*. Yet the disorder is in the finest way imaginable ; she now eats with some appetite & as nearly as possible follows Buchan's prescription in every respect. You will think me a *Savage* when I assure you that the idea of her having fairly got the Jaundice put me & likewise herself into *great joy*, for when *that* was certain one knew *what* to do, but beforehand I grew quite restless & uneasy not knowing what was good or what was hurtful for her, & as the Mind seems nearly annihilated before the disorder declares itself you may imagine the relief it was to see her illness face to face & take the weight & colour from the inside to place it on the outside. . . .

P.S. . . . Poor dear Kate occupies me entirely. I'm sure she has long had a heavy lodgment of bile which probably the sea stir'd up, tho' it did not dissipate it for her as it did for Ellen who is now as fresh as a rose & as merry as a cricket which I wish you w<sup>d</sup> tell her father & brother, as well as her Mistress's approbation of her conduct. It is really incredible how cleverly she makes herself understood amongst the Servants & carries her point thro' thick & thin.

### From HER JOURNAL

Wed. 29<sup>th</sup> [October]

" This was the first day of K's dining down stairs since her illness. In the Eve's the Princess *Rummaged* her treasure cases that are under her Bed & gave me a comical little Ring, a Monkey's head carv'd upon an Emerald set in diamonds. The dear P. is not very well today. She has given me this Eve's a *gage d'amitié* of high value indeed, her own Picture which has just been brought from Moscow Drawn as if she was sitting in the Peasant's Cottage to which she had been exiled during the reign of the Emperor Paul.



PRINCESS DASCHKAW IN EXILE

*From a print of the painting given by Princess Daschkaw to Martha Wilmot*





*Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ The Princess Shew’d me this Eve<sup>g</sup> the dedication which she had just written for her History—’tis dedicated to me.<sup>1</sup> I have been aware of her intention for some time past or else I’m sure I should have been quite overwhelmed by it. Dear respected Friend, may it be long before either dedication or book of Memoires retrace to the public the scenes of that life which must be closed before they are publish’d

*Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ . . . Yesterday was the Melancholy day for giving up to Government the Recruits which the Princess was oblig’d to furnish. This year there are 4 men taken from every five hundred, last year there were only half the number. The Man who goes as a Soldier is considered as *Dead* to his family. In conformity to this idea little Pashinka has been in floods of tears bewailing the loss of an Uncle who was amongst the number. This idea arises from the size of the Empire which (together with bad posts & little notion of reading or writing amongst that class) makes any *news* from a Soldier a thing scarcely ever possible. His friends are therefore inconsolable for a short time & then forget him entirely. ’tis a cruel period therefore for a good Master or Mistress who *must* notwithstanding supply the demands of the Crown. Martishka has been with her friends & relations to cry together & probably to eat & drink. Ellen says she is the *finest cryer for so young a one* she ever heard.

. . . . .

*Friday 14<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ The Steward is return’d this Eve<sup>g</sup> from Kaluga, the principal town of the Government we live in, with 7 out of the 10 Recruits which he conducted to the Army a few days ago or rather to the Capt<sup>n</sup> of the Guards sent from St Petersburg. to accept them & reject others who did not fit the standard for height, length, breadth of Chest & Shoulders &c. &c. by which they were measured. Pashinka’s Uncle is return’d, tho’ a most uncommonly handsome fine

<sup>1</sup> The original letter, written in French in the Princess’s hand, is preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy.

looking Young Man—it seems however that his chest was half an inch too narrow. To be rejected is a great triumph & therefore there will be 7 joyful families in the Village this Eve<sup>g</sup>. However 7 others must be chosen and 'tis a cruel moment for the dear princess who is not well this Eve<sup>g</sup> & is greatly shock'd at the idea of the disquietude which this will occasion amongst the poor Peasants. Happy he who is lame, deaf, blind or maim'd, (& by the by they often cut off a joint of a finger or cut a limb as the time for recruiting approaches & that 'tis known who is to be chosen) for such have a *quittance* from Nature of which they gladly avail themselves.

The return of these men brought on a conversation in which the P. mention'd the change that the Military had undergone from the beginning of Paul 1<sup>st</sup>'s reign, the change of dress, *tightening* & constraining the Men so as to produce illnesses & various inconveniencies. He quarter'd them likewise upon the inhabitants of towns in a more burthensome manner than during the reign of Kath. who kept them on the Frontiers mostly encamp'd when that was possible. During her life less than 2000 was the proportion for Moscow, in Paul's 15,000 & no barracks provided. The circumference of Moscow is 26 miles, its inhabitants about 250,000. The inhabitants of Moscow pay a considerable tax for lighting the Streets which by the by are very badly lighted.

*Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ Tonight I again heard the Empress Katherine's letters to the Princess D. who read them for Kitty & again I admired her spirited charming style of writing. The *Imperial conversation* which follow'd unfolded the following curious circumstances. At the period of Katherine's intimacy with Poniatofsy<sup>1</sup> while she was Grand Dutchesse & he Polish Ambassador, 'tis a well known fact that he used to visit her at Oranienbaum & likewise that He was

<sup>1</sup> Stanislaus Poniatowsky (1732-1798), last King of Poland, known as Stanislaus II. While Saxon Ambassador at St Petersburg he formed a notorious attachment for the Grand Duchess Catherine, whose influence, when she became Empress, was largely instrumental in raising him to the Polish throne. Noted for his handsome appearance and extravagance. Abdicated on the outbreak of Kosciuszko's rising in 1794 and died in St Petersburg.

one night seiz'd by the Grand Duke's Guards & brought prisoner before him, that Peter<sup>1</sup> call'd a Council of War, & after various opinions (such as one recommending his being thrown into the Sea, another offering to fight him) & no decision it was refer'd to the Empress Eliz<sup>th</sup> and by her decreed that the Prisoner (who she affected to suppose could not be Poniatofsky) should be released without further notice.

This affair however had been spread abroad, & a great feast for the name day of Peter & of his son Paul (w<sup>ch</sup> come together) happening immediately after, at which all the partys were to appear, caused a general embarasment. Count Poniatofsky wish'd to appease the G<sup>d</sup> Duke but had not even imagined any plan to effect it when a follower & friend of his M. de Branitsky, a Man who did a successful thing more frequently than a cleaver one (& does so still for he is alive), happening to dance with the Countress Eliz<sup>th</sup> Worontzow,<sup>2</sup> Peter's Mistress, say'd to her, 'What a pity it is to have this foolish story in circulation while your influence and goodness of heart could settle everything in a moment.' She enquired how. He told her by representing it as a matter of slight

<sup>1</sup> Later Czar Peter III, who was assassinated in the Revolution of 1762.

<sup>2</sup> Countess Elizabeth Woronzow (1739-1792), eldest daughter of Count Roman Woronzow and sister of Princess Daschkaw. While Maid of Honour to Catherine II, when Grand Duchess, she became the mistress of her husband, Peter, later Czar Peter III. This *liaison* provoked general astonishment at Court, as Elizabeth was both ugly and stupid in contrast with the other handsome and gifted members of the Woronzow family. Peter doubtless had his reasons for choosing her as a companion in preference to his clever and unscrupulous wife, and in spite of his supposed mental shortcomings he formed a far truer estimate of Catherine II's character than did his mistress's brilliant sister. "My child," he said one day to Princess Daschkaw, "you would do well to recollect that it is much safer to deal with honest blockheads like your sister and myself than with great wits who squeeze the juice out of the orange and then throw away the rind." For Elizabeth, it may justly be said that she did love Peter for himself, and not like the majority of persons in her position, for what could be got out of their paramours. It was thought by many that Peter intended to marry her and shut up his wife in a monastery on the very day of the *coup d'état* (June 29, 1762) which raised Catherine to the throne. Though arrested along with the Czar she was later liberated, and after Peter's assassination she was allowed to retire to Moscow, where the Empress showed how little jealousy she bore her by purchasing a house for her.

In 1765 she married Colonel Alexander Poliansky, later Counsellor of State and Court Chamberlain, by whom she had two children. Of these, Alexander married Elizabeth, daughter of M. Ivan Ribeaupierre, and Anne married Baron D'Hoggier, Dutch Ambassador in St Petersburg.

consequence to the G. Duke, & added ' You would obtain a pension of 3000 roubles (about £300) if you succeeded '. The simple round faced Dame made no reply, but when ask'd by Peter after the dance ' what that fellow had been saying ' she told it all. Peter no sooner heard of *a Pension* for her than he exclaim'd, ' Faith that's an honest Lad, but let *me* speak to him '. When Branitsky came across the room he told him nearly the same thing & desired him to come to a certain part of the Grounds Monte Plaisir at 2 o'clock with Poniatofsky, & then he would confirm his promise of forgiveness. Branitsky repeated the affair to Count P. who refused to go imagining it must be some plan of the G<sup>d</sup> Duke's to have him assassinated. However his friend at length prevail'd, he accompanied him to Monte Plaisir, & there met the G. duke who held out his hand to be kiss'd while he kiss'd his cheek (according to the Russian fashion). They were about to seporate when Peter seizing Poniatofsky by the arm began to stride forward with all his might & main dragging along the astonish'd Count. At last they stop'd at Katherine's Apartments, & the despicable mean spirited Peter ordering the Door to be open'd left the Count there & retired ! Such is the Virtue, the Morality & the Magnanimity of the Great !

*Monday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1805 N.S.*

' This Eve<sup>g</sup> the Princess presented me with a most exquisite beautiful box of arboris'd agate set in gold with as much taste as if it had been the fashion of today. It is render'd a still more valuable present from the assurance which she gave me of her attaching an idea of sentiment to it quite peculiar as it had belong'd to her Mother for whose memory her respect was unbounded, & that box is one of the only Memorandums of her which she ever possess'd. It seems the Countess de Worontzow (her Mother whose name was Surmine) had been enormously rich.<sup>1</sup> She had landed Estates to a great amount, & precious stones, pearls &c. &c. in profusion ; one gown & petticoat for example was all embroider'd in flowers of pearls & the P. tells me that she heard of *pints* of pearls being measured when said dress was undone. But she only *heard* as neither she nor her sisters had any of them. Count W. had other female acquaintance whom he prefer'd to his

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 321, note 1.

daughters & his mistresses embezzled them all. This together with some other extravagances of her Father was of course the reason that Princess D. had not one Rouble of fortune from her Father, & the early part of her married life & widowhood she had much poverty to struggle with.

But a few days ago she gave me a *gage d'amitié* which she priz'd to such a degree that she told me she had intended to have it buried with her, and that in changing that intention in order to give it to me I might judge of her tenderness & affection. It was the first present She ever receiv'd from Katherine the Second, & certainly serv'd to recall the most interesting period of a friendship which *then* existed assuredly, as Katherine was only Grand Dutches ; but for which sentiment *they say* a Crown very very rarely leaves room & I doubt whether the Great Katherine form'd an exception to the general observation. This pledge must therefore have been dear to the princess who uniformly lov'd & admir'd Katherine. It is a beautiful fan which the Princess happening to admire in Katherine's hand was requested by the Empress to accept as a memorandum of her affection. This happen'd just before the Princess D's marriage. I think I shall get it elegantly framed, and consider it as one of the most valuable memorandums of friendship which I possess.



*PART II*  
CATHERINE WILMOT  
LETTERS FROM RUSSIA  
1805-1807









CATHERINE WILMOT

*From a portrait painted by an unknown artist in Russia, now in the possession of Mrs. Evelyn Marindin, M.B.E.*

CATHERINE WILMOT  
LETTERS FROM RUSSIA  
1805-1807

THE following note prefixed to a volume of these letters is in her sister Alicia's handwriting :—

“ Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1805 my sister Kitty left Cork for Dublin with my Father & Robert & her Maid, from whence she sail'd the following Sunday for Parkgate. On her arrival in England she was met by Mr Hamilton and with him went to his house in Liverpool where in a few days she was joined by my Brother Edward & shortly after with him & Mr H. went to London there to remain till the necessary preparations were made for her going to Russia to see Matty and the Princess Daschkaw.

13<sup>th</sup> of July she left London & went with Edw<sup>d</sup> to Gravesend where she & *Eleanor* her Maid immediately got on board the ‘ *Good Intent* ’—Cap<sup>n</sup> *Clark*. They did not put to sea from off Yarmouth Roads till Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> & on the 26<sup>th</sup> anchor'd before Cronenbourg castle in Elsineur. She wrote a few lines from thence to my Father.

The beginning of Sep<sup>r</sup> we heard of her safe arrival in Russia & received the following letters from her.”

TO HER SISTER ALICIA

4<sup>th</sup> of August 1805

“ On board the *Good Intent* lying before the fortifications of Cronstadt in the Mole.

This day 3 weeks we left London and at 6 o'clock this Morning we anchor'd in Russia ! Now my dear A. I may as well fold up

my letter for as I am a State Prisoner on board Ship & have only taken a few observations through the Telescope on Deck, I have only to communicate that the Stonework of the Forts & Batteries here is remarkably handsome & impregnable, that the Men of War are excessively ornamental & numerous, and that the Mole is fill'd with Merchantmen which I fear very much will retard considerably our Operations. The Water is quite alive with little boats returning from Peterhoff where last night, in consequence of the Empress Dowager's birthday, fêtes, Masquerades &c. &c. &c. were held for her honor and glory, and a Country Palace surrounded with Woods call'd Oranienbaum borders the opposite Shore. This is all I see of Russia, excepting (of its inhabitants) two Custom House Officers who came the moment we anchor'd & seal'd up our Trunks, & now a Soldier who stays on deck to watch that nothing contraband is convey'd away from the Ship till we get under way for Petersburg. The Capt<sup>n</sup>, good man, is gone on shore to see what can be done, but as this is Sunday I fear nothing very effective from the Agent can be expected. Well to be sure, I little thought that the first thing I should have to complain of in Russia was *heat* but it is insufferable ! The boats have got awnings over them, & I observe that this Soldier on deck has nothing but trowsers & a linen Great Coat to guard him from the inclemency of the weather.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of July I wrote a line to my Father from Elsineur & that Eve<sup>g</sup> proceeded prosperously on our Voyage which I was rather sorry for as I exceedingly should have liked to remain there for a week. Its situation is charming, and as Copenhagen is but 30 miles from it we might have taken a very pleasant frolic there. I rooted out Hamlet's Garden with the assistance of Baron Boije & a jewish ciceroni, & got into a *Shakesperian tantrum* at finding myself in the place whence the Story originated of pouring poison into the King's Ears &c. &c ; but independent of its classicality it is sweetly situated & commands a most lovely view from the height of a terrace which domineers over Denmark & Sweden, the latter Country being only divided by the Sound which in that place is at the distance of but 4 miles. The Castle of Cronenburg on the Danish side & that of Helsingborg on the Swedish force forward the opposite shores & the beating surges roar in eternal Warfare. Cronenburg which is a gothic building has escaped all

ravages, but Helsingborg seems crumbling to decay. In the wide reach of water-view at either extent Ships riding at anchor & thousands of little boats tossing & glittering in the spray were to be seen till lost in the distance.

I had imagined Elsinore a wretched straggling place, a sort of long neck'd yelping thing that bark'd the King's prerogative at every passenger ! But tho' it is an European toll yet its situation is really delightful, & had we been delay'd there it would have been but a Morning's row to go to Helsingborg in Sweden where the Court resides at present & which we saw plainly from the Terrace in Hamlet's Garden. However we sail'd away & left there 2 of our companions whose voyage ended there, one a West Indian abomination, the other a Russian Officer (Baron Boije) the *queerest fish* I ever saw\*—there was nothing he did not know, tho' but 27 years of age. For the first 2 days he kept scampering at full stride up & down deck, both day & night I may say for his footsteps never ceased, & smiling & frowning & muttering to himself the entire time. His appearance was rather *Vagabondish* at the first glimpse, & then one was at a loss to know whether he was insane or at least walking in his sleep. He addled me to death, and as I did not come out of my Cabin the 1<sup>st</sup> day to dinner I could be no judge of his manners or conversation. The next day, however, I was amazed at his stile of handling the opinions of the two talking Men of our Crew, namely my protector Mr Whitlock, an English Merchant, & the odious West Indian. There were others present & he address'd them all in their own languages, servants & all, so that before he quitted table I heard him speak Russ, German, French, Swedish, Italien & English. He had been brought up in the camp of Suwaroff whom he idoliz'd, was at the famous battle of Prague,<sup>1</sup> had fought in Italy & told us in detail of all the battles & Heroes of the day with the quickest power of description possible. He had contrived to receive a classical education, & he not only was acquainted with all European literature & Politicks but he had 'every one of the Poets at his fingers ends'. His abhorrence of the French was the most comical in its effects on him I ever saw, for it acted like Spasms, & after the most uncommon abuse of their Nation & Revolution he ended in striking at the root of the

<sup>1</sup> Praga, a fortified suburb of Warsaw, which was stormed by the Russian general Suvorov in 1794.

mischief by his detestation of every Species of Civilization ! With learning, refinement, & eloquence, he supported most capitally the system of Barbarism in opposition to all existing Customs & quoted the ancients with as much ease as [blank in MS] does Esop's Fables. Altogether he was exceedingly diverting by his Enthusiasm, his variety & animated action which made Eleanor<sup>1</sup> take him for a Monkey I believe as he most frequently chatter'd in french till she discover'd what she esteems an infallible sign not only of a ' Christian ' but a ' *rail* Gentleman ', namely ' that he had hands as white as a Lily '. Our party at leaving Elsineur was sadly fallen off & became as stupid & well & eating & drinking as if we had nothing to do but fatten ourselves for a Novazembla Feast.

Since we left Elsineur we have scarcely felt the Motion of the Ship, & the Eve<sup>s</sup> we quitted it, sailing up the Sound like lightening, Copenhagen which is washed by the Waves flitted by us like a scene in a Magic Lantern, the floating batteries still lying before it as in 1801 when L<sup>d</sup> Nelson gain'd the battle ! This was the last object we saw, tho' Land often appear'd at either side of the Vessel, & almost through the Cattegat the Water was nearly fresh. Buoys, Light-houses, Rocks, Seals tumbling about the Ship, & sometimes a nook of an Island seen through the Telescope were the only interruptions to the Gulph of Finland. 9 long days have we been navigating that sometimes dangerous pass. I don't well know how to account for the time. The day on board ship is cut up by dining at 2 o'clock. Eleanor sat on deck and made me up a gown, in general she was sick when it was possible. I amused myself sometimes with reading ' *M<sup>me</sup> de la Valliere* ', sometimes books on Navigation belonging to the Cap<sup>tn</sup>, sometimes ' *Les Mères rivales* ', sometimes in reforming a reprobate cabin boy who is on the high road to the Gallows, sometimes with the Horses in the hold, then hearing of battles from the Sailors. So, reading, working, and sleeping like a Top. Our Woes ended this Morn<sup>g</sup> at 6 o'clock by anchoring at Cronstadt.

### *Sunday Eve*

" The Cap<sup>tn</sup> interrupted me by a letter from Matty (written this day 2 months from Troitskoe) which he rec<sup>d</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Booker,

<sup>1</sup> Eleanor Cavanagh, Catherine Wilmot's maid.





*Wednesday [7<sup>th</sup> August].* ST. PETERSBURG, at M<sup>r</sup> Raikes's

"Late last night I arriv'd in this magnificent looking town. Monday Morn<sup>g</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Booker sent his Carriage to the Mole, & M<sup>r</sup> Whitlock accompanied Ellen & me to his house in Cronstadt where he rec<sup>d</sup> us most hospitably & sent us in his carriage to undergo the usual examinations at the admiralty. We then return'd to dine at his house where he insisted on our taking up our quarters while we remain'd at Cronstadt. In the Eve<sup>g</sup> we walk'd to see the beautiful Docks & return'd to sup in the Garden where we remain'd till Midnight. I never felt weather in Italy more intolerably hot than this, & the Musketoes are agonizing !

Yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Booker put us into a Barge, & giving us a trusty conductor sent us across to Oranienbaum, 8 Versts, where a carriage & another trusty conductor from M<sup>r</sup> Raikes met us with a Letter of invitation from M<sup>rs</sup> R. to beg I shou'd make her House my home at Petersburg. Oranienbaum is a country palace of the Emperour's & I instantly set off to see it. The grounds are a Vaux-Hall on a Gigantic Scale & the Palace is full of rarities which I have not time to explain, (for you must know the post is closed & this letter is to be smuggled in by some special favor of old Raikes's). We then drove on to Petersburg which was a little journey of 30 Versts, & I protest so lovely a drive I never beheld ; it is in the Style of that from Paris to Versailles. Palaces of the most astonishing beauty rising up at either side clothed in Forests & sweetly cultivated in pleasure grounds & Lawns to the front. Two or 3 are Imperial residences, and the road which is broad & superexcellent full of all descriptions of Equipages, mostly driving 4 Horses abreast & 2 to the end of the Shafts. Cream colour'd ones like our Kings with white Manes & tails down to the ground were attach'd to some of them. The Moon rose as yellow as gold over the black Forests & conducted us on to Petersburg where we arriv'd at near 11 o'clock. I was in a perfect extacy with all I had seen ! All the Family of the Raikes's were assembled in the balcony & flew down stairs to meet us. We were then conducted up to the Balcony where all sorts of Civility pass'd & where I saw the *reach* of this street (if so it may be call'd), the Neva running between this & the opposite Houses which is the handsomest river I ever saw in any town.

I forgot to tell you I got a 2<sup>nd</sup> letter from Matty written only a fortnight ago. It is full of messages of the most affect<sup>t</sup> nature from the Princess who has put matters in train for me to be hoop'd out & presented at Court. I am going to write a note to M<sup>me</sup> Poliansky, who resides near here, to inform her of my arrival. The P<sup>ss</sup> wishes me to reside at her house while I am in town, & M<sup>me</sup> P. has written the handsomest invitations. I am to delay therefore for a fortnight at Petersburg & then proceed to Moscow. Trusty Servants & travelling Carriages are to be provided for me. In short, my way indeed is strewn with flowers, for what with the affection of the P<sup>ss</sup> & her influence everything is *smack smooth* & I have only to repel politeness. I have written an expostulatory letter to the P<sup>ss</sup> on the subject of her coming to Moscow in this melting weather which Matty says is a sacrifice to welcome & hospitality, partiality & good fellowship far beyond any other I can have a conception of. Already a Fox fur pelisse of the rarest kind is provided for my bones & sundry peices of satin together with a sarsenett dress for my Squire ! I expect this Year to be a Fairy tale. Here my friend & Protector old Whitlock leaves me. My friends have work'd him through all his difficulties & now he goes to Archangel.

The Bugs & Musketoes punish us severely. I have slept on chairs without any covering *save my Chemise* these 2 nights. While I write my eye is attracted by the sight of Academies, Palaces &c which I see from the Window. Bands are playing, Ships sailing &c. &c. &c ! Oh, but the Men Servants do so amuse me ! They every one have the oddest appearance. They look as if a Turk had been their Father & a Quaker their Mother ! I cannot describe their appearance any other way. The sound of the language here is soft & agreeable.

And so adieu.

To HER SISTER HARRIET

ST PETERSBURG August 26<sup>th</sup>, CHEZ M<sup>ME</sup> DE POLIANSKY

" . . . Don't attempt to suppose, I can give you a detail of my *Life & Adventures* ; *nor don't dare to ask it*—for when that book of Matty's lies before you a description of either persons or places would be absolutely a work of supererogation. I am in the same

*House*, even in the same Apartments at the same time of year, have cross'd the Ocean in the same Ship, & have got the same Servant *Frederick* who conducted her to Moscow. In addition the P<sup>ss</sup> has sent me *Jerkoff*, her favorite *Major domo*, who has been with me since my arrival. My *rheumatic Protector* still continues here, & calls to enquire. But in fact I have a *Levéé* every Morn<sup>g</sup>, for what with letters that I brought from London & Matty's friends & those of M<sup>me</sup> de Poliansky the Morn<sup>gs</sup> are very pleasantly interrupted by Visitors.

On my arrival the 4<sup>th</sup> of this Month at Cronstadt I rec<sup>d</sup> a letter containing a request from P<sup>ss</sup> D. that when I came here I should be presented at Court. She also wrote to her Niece M<sup>me</sup> de P. to arrange matters for the ceremony. Unluckily the Court was at Peterhof, & as an opportunity occur'd for me to go on to Moscow, I declin'd the *Imperial honor* intended me. The Emperour & Empress came however to Petersburg, & the opportunity of going to Moscow fail'd (from a *Wisp* of circumstance too troublesome to disentangle in a letter) so that I was left without any excuse, and therefore my name was given in to the Countess Protassoff, Dame d'Honneur for a presentation.<sup>1</sup> This delay lost me 8 days, & till yesterday the *Imperial Operation was not perform'd*.

Two days before I went in *full puff* with M<sup>me</sup> de P. to make an acquaintance with the Countess Protassoff who was to present me, & yesterday at 12 o'clock you may fancy me *toss'd out* in a dress of white crape & roman pearls & white cameo ornaments, my Nob *catamomfricated* by a French hair dresser (as I chose myself) with Scarlet Larkspur to the front. (I suppose it would not be worth a pin if I did not give you this description.) Well Miss H—— THERE I was driven full speed in a coach & six to the Palace of the *Tauride* (a lovely place as I ever beheld) & conducted by M<sup>me</sup> de P's Servants into an immense Marble Hall (larger than a Church Miss H——) full of Statues & Columns. You will think it extraordinary that I went *by myself* but it was the etiquette ! much as

<sup>1</sup> Countess Anne Protassoff (1745-1826), daughter of Senator Count Stephan Protassoff and his wife, Mlle. Anysie Orloff. Had been a Lady in Waiting at Court since the beginning of Catherine II's reign. Was one of Catherine's closest friends and was used by her to spy upon her son Paul's Court at Gatchina. Was a cousin of Alexis and Gregory Orloff, and on the latter's death brought up his two natural daughters in her house in St Petersburg.

I expostulated with M<sup>me</sup> de P. & M<sup>me</sup> de Scherbenin (P<sup>ss</sup> D.'s daughter) & everyone I knew. From the Hall a dozen Servants conducted me into a sumptuous looking apartment (full of Officers in Stars) through which I pass'd, & so to another which was empty & which led to the room of presentation. Two Lords in Waiting rose up, & one of them (in the white uniform of the Horse guards with a crimson order & half a dozen Stars) very politely began to speak french to me. One other Lady had arriv'd before me. Presently in flourish'd Gen<sup>l</sup> *Kutusow*, uncle to M<sup>me</sup> de Poliansky (who is Chief in command of the troops just marching against the French) & whom I had known. He is a most respectable old Gentleman & I felt quite at ease at having him for a Sanctuary.<sup>1</sup> Then in came a Lady bowing like a Man (tis the old Russian mode of salutation) with a diamond Cypher on her left shoulder, & in 10 minutes afterwards a pretty little Girl looking very modest & like a Victim.<sup>2</sup> We all then began to talk at one another, to walk about the room, & to look at the beautiful Garden in which the Palace is situated.

After having waited three quarters of an hour, at length an opposite door open'd, & thence came the Empress Elizabeth follow'd by the *fat* Countess Protassoff at her heels. The Empress is the loveliest creature I almost ever saw & in both face & figure excessively like the print of *Cordelia*, King Lear's daughter.<sup>2</sup> At her entry the Ladys rose & the Gentlemen retired. She was dress'd in white embroidery & immense pearls in her beautiful light brown hair. She has the humility, modesty, and sweetness of an Angel in her demeanour, & when we were presented & would fain have kiss'd her hand she struggled from the Ceremony & in her turn stoop'd down & kiss'd our cheeks. She spoke french to all, excepting one Russian lady to whom she spoke Russ. Her voice is very sweet & low, & she speaks as quick as lightening. Appropriate *trifles* were all of course she utter'd. She ask'd me

<sup>1</sup> Prince Michael Kutusow-Smolensky (1745-1812), Russian soldier and diplomat. Disregard of his advice resulted in the disastrous campaign ending at Austerlitz later in 1805. After this he resigned his command, but returned in 1812, when his strategy was largely responsible for the Russian successes against Napoleon. For his services during the French invasion he was created Field-Marshal and Prince by Alexander I and given the title of Smolensky.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly from a picture by Angelica Kauffman.

' how I lik'd Petersburg ' & hoped it ' had given me a good impression '. I said ' *it had* ', (was not that witty ?). She said ' she had heard of my Sister at Moscow, & that she understood I intended soon to take a long Journey for the gratification of seeing her.' I said ' *yea* ' ! & that I only delay'd at Petersb. for the honor of being presented to her Imperial Majesty. She then bow'd, & after staying about q<sup>r</sup> of an hour (all parties standing in a Semi-circle by her) she withdrew with a mob of attendants at her heels, lovely interesting elegant Creature that she is !!

*Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> August*

" I am grievously vex'd for I find I am knock'd down for a further delay. After being presented to the young Empress, I understand it is the indispensable etiquette to go through the same ceremony with the Dow<sup>r</sup> Empress, for which purpose M<sup>me</sup> Poliansky presented me to P<sup>ss</sup> Prosorofsky last night who said she would report me to her Imperial Majesty & let me know the day. This P<sup>ss</sup> Prosorofsky is Dame d'honneur to the Dow<sup>r</sup> Empress.<sup>1</sup> On my arrival here M<sup>me</sup> de Scherbenin (P<sup>ss</sup> Daschkaw's daughter) came off to see me.<sup>2</sup> She is past 40 years of age, & an invalid from billious complaints, but looking the picture of health. She is a most perfect Woman of the World remarkably cleaver, highly

<sup>1</sup> Princess Anna Prosorowsky (1747-1824), *née* Wolkonsky, wife of General Field-Marshal Alexander Prosorowsky, Lady in Waiting since 1765. Her daughter Anna (1782-1863) was also a Lady in Waiting ; she married Prince Theodor Galitzen.

<sup>2</sup> Anastasia Scherbenin (1761-1830), eldest child of Prince Michael Daschkaw and his wife *née* Countess Catherine Woronzow. After a brilliant education, which included extensive travels with her mother in Western Europe, she married General Scherbenin. This marriage turned out unhappily and she soon separated from her husband, who gave her an estate in the province of Kursk on which she lived for a time. From now onwards she was on bad terms with Princess Daschkaw and was eventually disinherited for her cruel and vindictive conduct on the occasion of her brother's death in 1807—see below, p. 281. She did, however, inherit part of her brother's estate and brought up his illegitimate children. When her mother died she settled in Moscow in consequence of a quarrel with a neighbouring landowner in Kursk. Largely owing to her extravagance she fell into considerable poverty and was ultimately obliged to resort to teaching for a livelihood. She died in Moscow, it is said, almost completely destitute. In spite of her faults she seems to have been a woman of strong character ; and her nephew, the historian, Michael Scherbenin, has given her the credit for his literary education.



THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH

*From the portrait by G. Monnier formerly in the Stroganoff Collection  
in St. Petersburg*



skill'd in Languages and *Mistress of the art of pleasing*. I never heard an English Woman express herself half so well as she does in English. She has been marvellously civil & kind to me, has made me dine 3 times at her House, had arranged Carriage & Servants to attend me to Moscow (which I thought proper to refuse), we have walked *tête-à-tête* in the public walks for hours together, & in fact her politeness is unbounded. Is it not comical ? when her *Mother* & *she* are not *on terms*, & she was not written to by her about me. Another of my Russian acquaintances is the *Countess Worontzow*<sup>1</sup> at whose house we spent a very pleasant day in the country. You may guess from the Name that she is a near relation of this House. She knew everybody that I did in Italy, & had taken the same tour I did only a few months later. I find her a very pleasant fashionable Woman. Her beautiful sister the P<sup>ss</sup> Gallitzen<sup>2</sup> is ' they say ' going to be married to Lord Granville Leveson Gower, our Ambassador.<sup>3</sup> By the by he has been very attentive to me in consequence of Lord Harrowby's

<sup>1</sup> Countess Irène Woronzow (1768-1848), wife of Princess Daschkaw's first cousin Count Ilarion Woronzow. Elder daughter of Privy Councillor Ivan Ismailoff by his wife Alexandrina, daughter of Prince Boris Yous-souppoff. Her father was one of the few ministers who remained faithful to Czar Peter III during the Revolution of 1762, and for this reason was excluded from State service by Catherine II. Her husband having died in 1790 at the age of thirty she went to live for some years in Italy with her sister Eudoxie, later Princess Galitzen. Her only son Ivan inherited the Daschkaw title. See below, p. 304 and note.

<sup>2</sup> Princess Eudoxie Galitzen (1780-1850), *née* Ismailoff, a noted St Petersburg beauty and wife of Prince Serge Galitzen. Known popularly as "Princesse Nocturne," and by members of the British Embassy as "the little Barbarian." Her rich husband, whom she had married in 1799 at the express command of the Czar Paul I, deserted her immediately after the nuptial ceremony. She now thought of obtaining a divorce and marrying the British Ambassador, Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, with whom she was having an *affaire*, but nothing came of this project. In old age she developed a curious passion for mathematics and published a work on practical physics. She is believed to have been one of the few chaste women in a profligate and degenerate society. Her extreme beauty and intelligence inspired the poet Pushkin to dedicate a madrigal to her.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Granville Leveson-Gower (1773-1846), later 1st Earl Granville, English diplomat and politician. Youngest son of the 1st Marquess of Stafford by his third wife, Lady Susannah Stewart, daughter of the 6th Earl of Galloway. In 1804 he succeeded Sir John Warren as British Ambassador in St Petersburg, where he laboured without success to persuade Alexander I to join England against Napoleon and was recalled in 1807 after the formation of the Franco-Russian alliance. Bellingham,



letter.<sup>1</sup> He wrote me a very polite note offering his services, and then call'd on me with his Secretary Mr Stewart.<sup>2</sup> I was not at home, & therefore as I wanted that he should pay a visit to the C<sup>ss</sup> Protassoff (which was a matter of etiquette) to appear for me as my Ambassador previous to my presentation. I wrote to him expressive of my wishes on the occasion, he called on me again & again I was not at home. The 3<sup>rd</sup> time however was the charm. He promised to go that Eve<sup>g</sup> (w<sup>ch</sup> he did) & afterwards I met him & *all the mission* at a grand Supper at the P<sup>ss</sup> Valchasky's. He came up & told me he had done my business &c. &c. &c. Mr Stewart came up & introduced himself to me. They are both highly Gentlemanlike but L<sup>d</sup> L. Gower is a *flaming* beauty with the sweetest manners possible. Mr. Ponsonby is another of the Secretaries & Mr Ross the private one. M<sup>rs</sup> Ross has been excessively polite, I have dined with her & she has taken me to see

the fanatic who assassinated the English Prime Minister Perceval in 1812, intended his bullet for Leveson-Gower, from whom he imagined that he had received some ill-treatment in Russia. Leveson-Gower was later Ambassador in Paris for many years. Noted for his good looks and skill at whist. Was an inveterate gambler, once losing £23,000 at a single sitting at Crockford's. He married in 1809 Lady Harriet Cavendish, daughter of William, 6th Duke of Devonshire, but had previously been the lover of his wife's aunt, Henrietta, Lady Bessborough, who bore him two children. He passed as a clever and shrewd diplomat, being also well read and kindly in private life, though as a lady killer he appears to have been rather selfish. His interesting *Private Correspondence*, 1781 to 1821, edited by his daughter-in-law, Castalia, Countess Granville, was published in 1916.

<sup>1</sup> Dudley (Ryder), Lord Harrowby (1762-1847), later 1st Earl of Harrowby, English politician. Became Foreign Secretary in 1804, but resigned after a few months on falling downstairs on his head at the Foreign Office and thereby being "totally disqualified from holding so laborious a post." Though he sat in various Cabinets for over twenty years he never held responsible office again. A straightforward, if mediocre, politician whose abilities were marred by a bad temper. He married Lady Susan Leveson-Gower, a sister of the British Ambassador in St Petersburg. He was related to the Wilmots through his great-grand-uncle, the Rev. Dudley Ryder of Nuneaton, whose son John became Archbishop of Tuam and married Catherine Wilmot's grand-aunt Alicia. See above, Introduction, p. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Stuart (1779-1845), later Sir Charles Stuart and 1st Lord Stuart of Rothesay, British diplomat. Son of General Sir Charles Stuart. Was created Count of Machico and Marquess of Angra by the Portuguese Government during the Peninsular War. Later served as Ambassador in Paris, the Hague, and St Petersburg. He married Lady Elizabeth Yorke, daughter of Philip, 3rd Earl of Hardwicke.



PRINCESS EUDOXIE GALITZIN

*From the portrait by Alexis Egoroff in the Tretiakoff Gallery in Moscow*



*Funerals, Silver Shrines, China Manufactory's &c. &c.* As for Mr Ponsonby, I only got a glimpse of him once.<sup>1</sup>

Another day we spent in the country at the Baroness Wiall's (a german Family) *Musical to Madness*. We stole in on *tip toe* before dinner into the midst of a *Concert* where were M<sup>me</sup> Mara Florio, & the first *professional* executioners in Russia. Afterwards we went into *Liqueures, Cheese, Horsereddish, sausages &c. &c. &c.* on little tables, & then into the dining room, which was painted in fresco to imitate a Temple in a Wood where we dined. From the specimens I have seen the Russian Tables are abundant in every species of luxury—Jam-Ices, *Fruits, Creams, Wines*, & so forth almost without end.

As to the English here, it is like going into another Country to associate with them, for they live entirely amongst themselves. Mr Raikes's House I look upon as a Home. I can't describe to you their kindness—they wanted me to stay with them all the time I was at Petersburg, & have got a sweet place in the Country that they invite me to perpetually but that I cannot go to. M<sup>rs</sup> Raikes is a young woman married to a *blind cleaver little Witch* of a Man (Timothy so call'd) of between 70 and 80. There are little *Robins of looking things* a Son & a Daughter, excessively good natured. But my *Wonder* of a friend in the Family is M<sup>rs</sup> Raikes's brother, John Cavanagh Esq<sup>re</sup>. He is by way of a *Lothario*, but a Merchant to his fingers ends, & besides remarkably accomplish'd in sundry Languages & general information with a capital *head piece*! I inform'd him very expeditiously that I had receiv'd offers of service from *every body*, but to prevent confusion & come to the point, I named *him* my *Master of Ceremonies & Bearleader* while I stay'd at Petersburg. Every Morn<sup>g</sup>, therefore, he regularly pays me a visit to *receive my orders* (as he says I consider him

<sup>1</sup> Hon. William Ponsonby (1787-1855), later 1st Lord De Mauley. Youngest son of Frederick, 3rd Earl of Bessborough by his wife Lady Henrietta Spencer, daughter of John, 1st Earl Spencer. At this time he was embassy attaché to Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, who had been his mother's lover. His lazy habits unfitted him for the diplomatic service since he rarely got up before three o'clock in the afternoon. He was, however, by no means unintelligent since he played a good game of chess and was known for the facility with which he could construe Greek at sight. He married in 1814 Lady Barbara Ashley-Cooper, only daughter of Anthony, 5th Earl of Shaftesbury. Through his wife the ancient peerage of De Mauley was revived in his favour in 1838.

only as a *Fagtotum*). 'Tis he who has got me the best & cheapest travelling carriage *that ever was seen* & a treasure of a servant who liv'd with him 10 years. He puts my letters himself into the Office, buys me Maps & everything I want in that way, gives me advice as to my *Steerage* in this Russian World, & in short is my guiding Star completely. He has such a world of affairs on his shoulders that his having accepted *my Appointment* (the Hallidays tell me) I am to consider a singular honor. . . .

Now I have to inform you that since I left London I have never known what it was to *catch the slightest cold* or ever felt the *toothache*, so that on the article of health I am very happy. Every Morn<sup>g</sup> at 7 o'clock I go into the cold Bath, & take a vast deal of exercise. I have *Petersburg by heart* almost—I have a capital *Map* of it, & mounted up to the top of the Church in the Fortress to look at the town in a glance. The Neva is so magnificent ! always full (as it is not subject to the ebb & flow of the tide). I suppose no river in Europe can equal it ! Petersburg is built on a number of little Islands, & the Country all about perfectly flat, but from the enormous scale on which every thing is built, the new look of the buildings & the number of public walks & gardens ! 'tis difficult to imagine a more beautiful Town, & as everybody sais, 't'is indeed worthy of being the Capital of this prodigious Country'.

The lower orders of people astonish me by their grotesque appearance & the great unmerciful *Patriarchal Beards* that the Men wear ! 'T'is impossible to conceive that they were *not* born before the Flood, or that their names are *not* Jacob, Benjeman & Manassus. At the rising & setting of the Sun & on other occasions they begin to cross themselves, but so *obstreperously* that the operation does not finish under q<sup>r</sup><sup>tr</sup> of an hour. They bow their heads down almost to the ground, & then not only *recover their ballance* but throw themselves proportionably back again, crossing themselves at arms length. The old women comfortably *kneel* down & kiss the ground (taking the precaution to slip their hands between it & their Lips). Floating on timber planks in the river before our Windows, I often see a dozen Men bowing with all their *Might & Main* in the manner I have mention'd with their long Beards *forking in the Winds*—t'is difficult to believe they are not *fell enchanters* laying the angry spirit of the *deep* by incantations dire and commune with the *dead* !! I have gone to their Churches.

*Thurs<sup>d</sup> 29<sup>th</sup> August*

“ God knows what I was going to say—you see the time I must have for writing. Yesterday I spent at M<sup>me</sup> de Sherbenin’s, the day before amongst my English friends & seeing sights. I have given a Guinea & a half for 24 little pictures representing the People *crying things about the Streets* which I am to send home by Cap<sup>tn</sup> Clark tomorrow. They are printed on infamous paper & do not convey half the grotesque appearance of them ; besides there is hardly any of the Costume of Women, & what there is not in their *Gala dress*. Such as they are, however, I send them for all your amusements. Guess the *only book* I have bought since I came here—the *Court Almanack* ! But such is the torture I undergo about *Names* that I found it indispensable ! Next Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September I am to set out ! Little I thought I should have made such a visitation at Petersburg !

*Sunday Night 31<sup>st</sup> Aug<sup>st</sup>*

“ A fatality hangs over this miserable Letter—this is Sunday Night, & t’is not gone yet. However this delay gives me the opportunity of inserting another Grand Ceremony that took place today with the Dow<sup>r</sup> Empress, & that liberates me from the necessity of remaining any longer at Petersburg.

After being at *Mass* I drove in *full puff* off to the Palace ; C<sup>ss</sup> Golavine<sup>1</sup> was there (a charming manner’d Woman) & after waiting half an hour in walk’d the P<sup>ss</sup> *Prosorofsky & prepared our Minds* for the appearance of the Empress Mother.<sup>2</sup> She then came in, dress’d in black lace robes & quantities of Diamonds in her Hair. She is a very fine looking Woman, tall & well made, & tho’ between 40 & 50 having quite the air & appearance of a young Woman. We approach’d towards her as she enter’d (she had one glove off for the operation of Kissing), & as we kiss’d her hand she kiss’d our cheeks. She stood & spoke to us (C<sup>ss</sup> Golavine & me) for 5 minutes, & then mov’d off to a Circle of Gentlemen who went through the same Ceremony. She asked me ‘ how long I had been at Petersburg ? Whether I had come from Eng<sup>d</sup> ? How I found Russia, & that she hoped I had been pleased at

<sup>1</sup> Countess Barbara Nicolaevna Golovine (1766-1821), *née* Princess Galitzen. An intimate friend of the Empress Elizabeth, wife of the Czar Alexander I. She left very interesting reminiscences in French which have been edited by the historian K. Walisewski.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 34, note.

## 178 CATHERINE WILMOT'S TRAVELLING CARRIAGE

Petersburg ' &c. &c. &c. &c. So now that these *Imperial Honors* are at an end, I may go off with myself as fast as I chuse.

Yesterday I had a most kind note enclosed in one from Matty from P<sup>ss</sup> Daschkaw acknowledging the Letter I had written to her from here, but lamenting the loss of every other ! Is it not grievous ? . . . The travelling carriage which I have got is excellent. It serves for a bed at night (& a most capital one) & has been fitted up for the purpose, having gone a Journey before. My 2 protectors (Frederick & Jerkoff) ride on the Barooch seat which is large enough to hold a third, and the Postillions in *full cry* on Horseback. I yesterday dined at M<sup>me</sup> Sherbenin's & met D<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Crichton.<sup>1</sup> To-day I have spent at M<sup>r</sup> Ross's, & the Eve<sup>g</sup> in walking in Count Stroganoff's Gardens.<sup>2</sup>

T'is dreadfully late, & I am very sleepy so dearest H—— adieu ! Tomorrow I shall be off for Moscow, thank Heaven. Little I thought I should be presented at the Russian Court when I made my resolution not to give *any* Letter, but to hasten on instantly to Moscow. . . . Think of the uncommon *gage d'amitié* that M<sup>me</sup> de Sherbenin presented me with last Night ! 5 pair of *Silver embroider'd Slippers* ! Well good Night. The weather is proving chilly, but I shall have a lovely *Moon* for my Journey. . . . KATHERINE WILMOT

<sup>1</sup> Sir Alexander Crichton (1763-1856), physician in ordinary to the Czar Alexander I. Born of Scottish parents in Edinburgh. At first he practised in London, where he made his name by a work on "Mental Derangement" which was published in 1798. He later became physician to the Duke of Cambridge, and in 1804 went out to St. Petersburg to attend the Czar. He made himself very popular in Russia and within a few years was appointed head of the whole imperial civil medical department. He was knighted by the Czar Alexander I in 1809, by King Frederick William III of Prussia in 1820, and by King George IV of England in 1821. He also published works on *materia medica* and the treatment of consumption. He probably did more than any other man of his times to advance medical science in Russia, being particularly active in allaying a serious epidemic which broke out in the eastern provinces in 1809. He married in 1800 Frances, only daughter of Edward Dodwell of West Molesey.

<sup>2</sup> The magnificent Stroganoff Palace was built facing the Nevsky Prospect and the Moika by Rastrelli in 1754. Its gardens still contain the Greek sarcophagus brought to Russia by one of the Stroganoffs from the Greek archipelago. The owner, Count Paul Stroganoff (1774-1817), was the leader of the group of brilliant young liberal ministers with whom the Czar Alexander I was now working on schemes of comprehensive domestic reform. He resigned his post in 1807 on the abandonment of these projects. His father, Count Alexander Stroganoff, had married as his first wife Countess Anna Woronzow, only daughter of Princess Daschkaw's uncle, Chancellor Count Michael Woronzow. This marriage turned out unhappily and was without issue.

TWO LETTERS FROM ELEANOR CAVANAGH  
WHO ACCOMPANIED CATHERINE WILMOT TO RUSSIA AS HER MAID

To LITTLE HENRIETTA CHETWOOD <sup>1</sup>

PETERSBURG August 20<sup>th</sup> 1805

“ MISS HENRIETTA !

While I was in the Ship one night (turning round in my bed) I laugh'd to myself to think the time down in the Village that you bid me send my love to you all the way from Russia, & I'll engage I thought of it often enough both by Sea & Land ! 'Tis likely enough you wou'd have got it by the Letters Miss Wilmot writes. But I'd be asham'd to put it in my own words, & since you ask'd me to tell you how I lik'd Russia (when once I was out of Ireland) 'tis the plainest way to slip in this bit of a Letter that will be unseal'd by yourself in Glanmire. If I know no more than a Fool how to make it out ! But tis *quair* things I have been seeing ! I like London very well, but tis more like Cork than *where we are* ! I saw a fine Play there ; the Maid of the House & Cap<sup>tn</sup> Wilmot's servant were sent to take care of me. Ogh ! my God the Horse Rider ! nice gold lace trimming his Jacket, & real Gentlemen & Ladies dancing on the Stage ! I saw a *dail* of things there, & in the Park too—Fashions of every sort & the London Ladies with their red cheeks (painted I'll engage, God save us !) & brazen Hats turn'd up to the front ! I did not think so bad of the Voyage at all, because I was not half so sick as in the Ship coming from Ireland ! We stop'd in Denmark at Elsineur, & all the Sea was cover'd over with Ships like a Wood ! 'Twas very pleasant ! As to that we had but 2 Stormy days of all the Passage. Signs by, I sat out & made a Gown while we were going along. Everything was very nice in the Ship ; the Cap<sup>tn</sup> was a very good sort of Captain ; and plenty of Hens to lay fresh Eggs ; & a Room with 2 beds to ourselves. We could get everything from James (the Steward) through the little Window out. Indeed the Captain &

<sup>1</sup> Henrietta, younger daughter of the Rev. John Chetwood of Glanmire, County Cork, and sister-in-law of Martha and Catherine Wilmot. She married Horatio Townshend of Firmount, County Cork.



above all the old Gentleman & the Servant who did everything like the Father of a Family ('Twas he who took care of us from London) were goodnatured. I think nothing of being at Sea, tho' they say we sail'd 1500 miles of ground. I never was so surpris'd as to see Mr Booker's Carriage at Chronstadt (where we anchor'd in Russia) drive down to the Shore for us to take us up to his House ! 'twas because the Coachman had a *quair* long sash & a black beard & a Coat (plaited about the Man's waist, may I never stir ! ) like a Petticoat. The Lord be praised there were English Maid Servants there, & indeed they were very civil ; & a fine set of Children belonging to the Lady of the House ! Ough ! my God ! to see the Country women ! Why wou'dn't they content themselves to dress like Christians ? Miss Henrietta, 'twou'd sour one to look at the Craitures with their blue & yellow & green cloth Petticoats bound with gold, & bouncing bobs of *air-rings* in their *airs* & shift sleeves like Men's shirt sleeves ! 'Twou'd make one ashamed to think how they'd ape the quality ! I'll engage they wou'dn't forget their *baid* necklaces ! Better for them wash their faces & not have so many *Flaighs* hopping about them. That I mightent but it wou'd !

'Twas 2 days after we went that we quit Mr Booker & sail'd 8 miles across to a fine Palace. God knows I wou'dn't know the name, off it wou'dn't be Orangenbaum ! There another Coach & 2 Servants with ugly beards (one of them as red as a Rose) came to take us 30 miles on to Petersburg ! Why, wou'd you believe it ma'am, they put 4 long tail'd Horses all in a row & then 2 again at the end of long rope traces (& they seldom cuts the Manes of them at all, for down they hang in bushels of plaits, or else without them) ! And Ough ! my God ! to hear the Smack & the cry that the Postillions give, & how they drive like Smoke up the Hills ! That I mightent ! but I made full sure to myself that we were fairly out of Ireland then ! I never see anywhere in Glanmire such a shew of Palaces and big Woods as them all by the Country at either side while we drove along. Images out upon the roofs with wings growing out of them as natural as a Bird. If it was not that I seen one on one of the Gentlemen's Heels ('twas he that had a big Cork-Screw in his hand, & by that I knew it might be the Country where all the Wine comes from), I was tired of reckoning & looking at them, & the Summer Houses, & the

elegant green Lawns, & the loads of Roses & geraniums, all out of doors ! 'Twas well we came in the Evening for the days are killing Hot, & the Sun here I believe is a bigger and more Scalding one than in Ireland !

I'll never forget how beautiful Petersburg look'd the first day. Cork is a *Flay* to it ; & the River as large as the Lee 5 times over ; I don't believe they call it by that name tho' ! We slept that Night at Mr Raikes's in a great Church of a House ; very civil People, & all as one as Mr Read or Mr Anderson down at Fermoy ! They gave me plenty of *Convaniencies* to wash out the things we *dirted* in the Ship, & indeed the Soap too was good enough. I'll engage I got *Tai* & fine *Craim* (& plenty of it) for my breakfast, & Miss Raikes's Maid give me a nice border of a lace Cap & Miss Wilmot's white wrapper dress'd me up smart enough to go with the Servants of the House down to see the Palace. I thought the *Screech* wou'd have Choak'd me when turning round my head what wou'd I see leaping over a *rail* Rock but a Giant of a Man on the back of a *Dragin* of a Horse. ' Stop him ' (sais I), for I declare to God, Miss Henrietta, but I thought the Life wou'd have left me to see a live Christian making such a Fool of himself, when what did I hear but that he was a *Marble Emperor* ! Some old Snake of a Man that they call Pater, or *Pater the Great*, or something like that !

The next day Madam Poliansky (a fine black eyed pleasant young Lady Niece to the Princess Daschkaw) sent off her Carriage for us. It was at night that we arriv'd here at her House, & I had a dread over me to walk through so many Ball Rooms as the *Black-amoor* with a yellow Jacket & a Turban & a Couple of Candles in his hands made us go through. Many a Gown might Nurse Connel get out of the Crimson Damask that the Walls are paper'd with ! Ough, but the Flies bit us all night long !! I was wishing for Mary Hurley (& Mistress Hurley too for the matter of that) to see the sight I seen when I woke in the Morning ! ' Carry me out ' (sais I). ' Who are you with your gold tossals & Star upon your Stomach & Crown upon your Head ? ' She had her eyes right fix'd upon mine, & close enough ; She watch'd me wherever I turn'd. They say she too is an Empeor of Russia, & there She hangs in a gold Frame as if She was alive. ' Ma'am ' sais I to My Mistress, ' what time do they breakfast in this *quair* place ? ' The

word was hardly out of my mouth when *thump*, a rap comes to the door & in walk'd a Grenadier of a Man with a silver Tray & Coffee Pot & 2 cups & saucers & a great *haip* of Rusks not on a plate at all, & after him streal'd in at his heels a Girl with a bit of a note to Miss Wilmot from her Mistress to ask her whether she wou'd like a Melon for her breakfast ! On then, why wou'dn't the poor thing clap a Handkerchief about her yellow neck & not make a Lady of herself with her Locketts & trash ! Says I to her, ' If we were in Cork now they'd give us a fresh Egg '. With that she was so struck that she went out of the Room shaking her head, *but the sirrah an Egg came at all !* Why Ma'am here they wou'd as soon think of flying as eating their breakfasts together. The next Day (above at M<sup>r</sup> Raikes's where I went to bring a Bedgown that I left behind) the young English Woman & her Brother left me in the passage while they went for their Hats, when up comes a Russian with a black Beard like a Horse's tail & putting his back against the wall he *stud* & said nothing at all. The inside of me sour'd at the sight of him & there he *stud* as grand as twopence. ' Tis a shame Sir,' sais I, ' that you don't shave off that Horsetail that's hanging from your Chin & not leave it there to frighten the People '. With that I look'd at him as bitter as soot. On he put his clean p<sup>r</sup> of white Linen gloves (not minding a word I said) & then began to tighten his Culgee of a fring'd Sash about his waist. Out we went & who shou'd I see but the *Beard* following the young Woman & her Brother & me. ' I'd be ashamed to walk the streets of Cork with the likes of you,' sais I, & look'd as black as a Sweep. With that they all laugh'd, & I came home and told it all to my Mistress.

'Tis a pleasure to see the plenty of Rooms there is to the Bed Chambers ! The 3 we have to ours are all full of glass & gold, & white Marble Tables, & a Harp, & a Harpsichord, & Stoves up to the Ceiling with gold Angels upon them, & a Clock that plays 8 tunes of itself ; & all the floors are made of square peices of *Mahogany* or something like it. Oh but one Eve<sup>s</sup> up comes my Mistress & bids me come down Stairs & bring one of her Gowns with me. Down I went with her, & what shou'd I see but a young Woman (very rosy & pretty indeed) who was they say a Princess & another that Miss Wilmot told me was M<sup>rs</sup> Hacket's Friend one Countess Ostrowman. I *stud* like a Fool, & they set about trying

on the dress. It fitted her very well, & I am making one for her just the same. I'm told she will wear it when she goes to Court. Indeed they were both very pleasant Ladies which made me think deep enough in my own mind that they were one time or another from Cork. Every day at Dinner the life almost leaves me with laughing when I look up at the Blackamoor who brings me up my Dinner. 'Give me a bit of bread' sais I. '*Glep*' sais he (for the Craiture don't know to call it by its right name). 'Well then give me *Glep* if that's your fun' sais I again; & tho' he talks that way *it is as surely Bread as any in Ireland*.

We have music eneough all over this House. 8 Men Servants sit down with their Flutes & Fiddles; they call them Slaves tho', but the never a bit of a chain do I see hanging about them any way. You'd like for to see the beautiful new gown I've got, & my Mistress's Sister is to make me the present of a silk one just out of the Shop & a Silver Crucifix that was made a present to me & a green silk bonnet that I bought myself. I am very happy & likes my place very much; & Miss Henrietta, if you'll go down to the Village you may tell my Father & Mother that I often thinks of their advice & follows it; & remember me to Mr<sup>s</sup> Mann. Why I sometimes think 'tis only to put on my Hat & Cloak & down I might run to the Village, when I look out of the window & see's Russia again before my eyes. I went to 3 of their Churches here & they are the same as our Chapels as to all I see (but there is one all the same) & Miss Wilmot knows a Roman who she has spoken to to send a *Clargy* here for me to confess to. 'tis for you to tell my People below in the Village that I mention it, I never goes out without *laive*, & every Morn<sup>g</sup> I walk with my Mistress half a mile to the Cold Bath at 7 o'clock before Breakfast. Last Sunday I was out all day with a very civil English family; & Miss Henrietta, will you *plaise* to tell them down below that I never makes free with any Body, nor won't. One might bid one of them 'Come here' loud eneough, but like Fools they stand grinning unless one says '*Paddy Suddy*' & then they bounce up & run as fast as anything, 'tis true for me! Why now Miss Henrietta, wou'dn't it be eneough to turn one's heart into a Curd fairly to hear them say *Da* instead of *Yes* & *Niet* instead of *No*. But their *aiting* is good eneough, & a *dail* of it and Fruits of all kinds. They brought me in a plate of ice & flump'd a big lump of it in my tumbler glass of

wine & water. I thought my heart wou'd be broke in telling them I wasn't used to it, but in they flounc'd another. I'll engage they thought they were making it as strong as *Whisky*.

Give my love Ma'am to M<sup>r</sup> Hayes the Butler, & the Ladies, & above all things to Master Edward, & to M<sup>rs</sup> Kanailly. I'd be sorry to go back *so soon as now*, for to be sure this is a wonderful grand Place & I'm always very merry tho' I'm often thinking of everybody in Ireland when I wou'd be sitting at my work. '*Mai deer how doo you doo!*' says the Lady of the House to me the other day! By that I made full sure that she was once at her birth from Ireland. She sends up stairs little Cossacs (Boys of 8 or 9 year old) dress'd beautifully to play on the *Tourban* & dance to divert my Mistress. Why, they play & dance together & the music never stirs out of their hands; it looks like a *quair* Guitar. But there is a *dail* of English comes here, Gentlemen & Ladies enOUGH. I writ by Miss Harriot (from London) to my Father & Mother a bit of a Letter nigh 2 months back, & I'd be proud to hear if they got & why they wou'dn't answer it. I wish you good bye Miss Henrietta, & I'll be making a Coat for you again, but I must make an end of my Letter. Give my love to Nancy Thornton & Julia & Anne, & indeed M<sup>r</sup> Roach was always mighty good to me & I'm following his advice, & to give my respects to M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Wilmot (if they wou'dn't be angry) & the young Ladies. I like to think of you very much, Miss Henrietta, & wou'd be glad if you wou'dn't forget me no more than I'd forget yourself.

This all at present from Your Sarvant

& also

ELEANOR CAVANAGH

#### ELEANOR CAVANAGH TO HER FATHER

[TROITSKOE] *October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1805*

" 'Tis best my dear Father, to begin by mentioning that I am in Russia! Indeed where we are now (in a fine Country Place) is many a hundred mile from the first big Town we came to, that they call St Petersburg. Dear Father, be sure to tell my Mother & Mary & Kitty that I give my love to them.

We were in a very pleasant Carriage the time of coming from Petersburg & travel'd in it for 8 days and 8 nights too. My

Mistress brought me blankets & a Pillow (the same as her herself) and we had plenty of leather ones, so I'll engage I slept through the night fair en enough & stretch'd at my full length because it was *quairly* made on purpose for travelling through the Night as well as the day. Well sure en enough we *druve* right into Moscow, & 't was the handsomest Palace my hand ever seen, like half a round, & a big Temple at the top of stone steps ! An Army, God knows, might live *unknownst* in the House ! This was the Princess Daschkaw's. I'll engage I'll never forget it ! I was not two hours there when Miss Matty Wilmot up & she says to me ' Eleanor ' says she, ' wou'dn't you be afraid of the Cold in the Country ? ' ' I don't know ma'am,' sais I, ' for all I know about it is very hot ! ' With that she laugh'd (Ogh ! She is a nice little Craiture !) & out she call'd her Maid Sophia and talk'd to her in Russian—that I mighten'd stir, but I thought the eyes would have dropt out of my head when I seen the beautifulest Cloak that hands ever made put straight upon my shoulders ! ' My God ! ' sais I to myself, ' what's all this for ! ' ' If I was in Glanmire now ' sais I, ' the Girls wou'dn't know me ! ' ' 'Tis for you, Eleanor,' sais she. ' There Eleanor is the makings of a Sunday Gound for you.' ' Is it joking you are Ma'am ? ' sais I. ' No, sure en enough I am not joking,' sais she, ' but cut it out & make it in to a dress gown for yourself.' Oh such a nice Coat, & such a Cloak (pelise they call it in this Country) as she clapt on my Shoulders ! 'Tis a twill'd purple & brown Silk lined all thro' & through with snow white Fur & trimm'd at the edge with Fur. The worth of it is five Guineas.

Sophia (Miss Matty's Maid) indeed is a very good natured & pretty girl. ' Eleanor ' she sais to me from the first minute & kiss'd both my Cheeks just as if she doated down upon me. ' I never seen you before to my knowledge,' said I. ' How do you do ' (as naturally as anything) sais a smart little Girl about eleven years old. ' I'm very well,' sais I. ' That's *Martishka*, (sais Miss Matty) another Girl belonging to me and who I am bringing up myself. So Eleanor,' sais she, ' 'tis for you to shew her a good example '. ' That's true Ma'am,' sais I.

The Girls then took me in to supper. It was near eleven o'clock. Plenty of Fish & nice hashes & pies & grapes & Apples & Water Melon. They were all very merry & making me eat & drink.

'Twas they who had the grand earrings in their ears & without any caps at all on their heads. 'Twas hard for me to swallow a mouthful with all the Pictures looking at me, some of them *without a tack* upon their backs except Wings like Birds upon their shoulders. But it wasn't them I was thinking of, 'twas the Princess of the Palace, P<sup>ss</sup> Daschkaw that I heard talk of so much in Ireland & all through Russia ! I look'd everywhere and down over the Bannisters when we were coming up stairs to bed ! But tho' I seen plenty of people I could not make her off at all. Just before my Mistress went into her room, bounce, the door open'd & in walk'd the Princess with a large Star upon her breast and as good a Face smiling & looking as good natured as a Child ! She did not see me at first at all, but it came into my head she had just the look of M<sup>rs</sup> Chetwood the day she gave me the White Wine up at the House for you. She staid some time, & the minute she spied me out (for I kept standing at the bedroom door) she took me by the hand, & ' I'm glad to see you ' sais she, & kiss'd me as kind as if I had belong'd to her. ' I'm oblig'd to you Ma'am,' sais I, & turn'd as red as a rose. ' Ellen ' sais she ' are you alive after the Journey ? ' ' Faith I am Ma'am,' sais I. ( ' What would kill me ? ' thought I, but I did not say so out loud.) May I never stir but she is the pleasantest Lady I ever seen in or out of Ireland ! The next Morning she give me my choice of three of the hand-somest Shawls as big as quilts, & I chose one, a purple in the inside & a scarlet border. Up I put it on my back & made a curtsey *as stiff as two pence* !

The next Evening the Princess sent her maids & Miss Matty's maids & myself to the finest Play House the World ever seen, and by the same token I wore my Shawl & we all walk'd there very pleasantly. I turn'd round my head & as grand as nothing at all there I seen a Man Servant walking behind us. ' Faith ', sais I, ' 'Tis very droll ! ' ' Walk slow,' sais I to Nastasia (the Princess's first maid) ' don't you see the Man is not come up with us yet.' With that she shook her head & on we went to the Play House. The life almost dropt out of me when the Curtain was drawn up. There we were all sitting in the Pit, & taken care of I'll be bound, for a guard stood all the time & walk'd home with us to the Palace besides the Servant. The Play was like Heaven himself. There was a Dragon ! & Kings ! & Birds ! and a Witch ! & loads of

Music ! & Flames, & Ladies & Gentlemen in gold & diamonds dancing, not on the ground at all hardly, and the beautiful Noise ! & Smoke ! & plenty of pleasure of all kinds ! ‘ Ogh ! ’ sais I, clapping my hands, ‘ Mary Nugent & Kiff wou’dn’t believe the sight I seen ’. With that I look’d up & thought I was in the air with the Angels.

Dear Father, give my love to Mrs Kinailly & give my love to my 4 brothers. I never seen finer Milk anywhere than in the Journey ; it *bait*s all the Milk I ever knew good or bad. I do be *draiming* of my brothers all the Night, so if they be sick, dear Father, let me know & put my Mother & everything into the letter you’ll be after writing.

From Moscow to the Country Palace where we now are & where we have been 3 weeks is more than 80 Mile. ’Twas like an Army when we left Moscow ! Such loads of coaches & sarvants ! I *druve* with the Princess’s first maid Nastasia. At night the Devil an Inn we came to, but a big Palace belonging to a Count ! We all sat very warm & pleasant, & then a sight of Maids belonging to the Palace came in & kiss’d us all round. I counted eleven of them, handsome looking girls eneough, & mighty civil & nice. They made signs to us & we all follow’d them out of doors across a Garden to a *darling* place, & up we went up stairs (Sophia & I with our hands under one another’s arms) till we got into a Play House. *May I never stir but I* believe it was ! There was an auld Man with a Trumpet in his mouth & his two eyes looking at me. ‘ Come here ’ says Miss Anna Petrovna, the P<sup>ss</sup> Neice (a fine young Lady who lives with her always). ‘ Come here ’ sais she. ‘ I’m frighten’d Ma’am ’ sais I. Ogh then, such things as I seen nobody knows but my own self ! I look’d thro’ a little hole, & faith there I seen London & Petersburg & cart loads of grand Towns, but ’twas very *quair* Cork did not come any how ! There was voices of live People talking out of little small Trumpets & singing, & doing everything like Christians. ‘ Well to be sure,’ sais I. ‘ Russia ! & good luck to you, you are a comical place ! & you’ll give me something to talk of many a long day ! ’ But this is not all, for when we went back to the Palace again there were 20 Musicians with Fiddles & Flutes & all sorts of Music playing *as fine as five Pence* ! ‘ Carry me out ! ’ sais I. ‘ What will come next ? ’ As sure as I am a Gun I guess’d right eneough, for



then People came in & danc'd & sung all the time the Company was eating their Suppers, & they did not hinder us from standing at the Door to listen & look at all the fun. When supper was over I took notice that the Princess cross'd & bless'd herself & went away into another room & all the rest follow'd. So without more ado down all of us sat to the same Table & the men servants attended us, & I believe there was more than 100 dishes, Fruit too of the finest sorts & kinds. We slept there & the next Morning we were up by six, & when the Ladies drank their Cups of Coffee I thought we were going off with ourselves, when my nose told my heart more dinner was coming ; & sure enough tho' it was early there was smoking dishes of meat & fish & pies & fruit & wine just as if it was 4 o'clock ; & when the Quality had finish'd no blam'st to us all 18 Maid Sarvents if we did not eat our belly fulls ! The laugh was not out of my mouth all the time, everything was so jolly & pleasant in itself.

That night we slept at an Inn belonging to the Princess herself, and the day after we came to where we are now, a grand elegant place, handsomer than Mr Courtney's up at Lota ! The name it goes by is Troitskoe; that is as much as to say *Trinity* in Russian, God save us ! The first thing the Princess done was to go to the Chapel, a beautiful one she has of her own, & the Priests gave her the Crucifix to kiss & sung psalms & burnt the blessed ashes, & then 2 Men at the Pillars of the Gate leading into the Lawn *stud* with a great Loaf of black bread & a handful of salt on the top of it, & the Princess receiv'd it as an offering, & gave them her Hand to kiss ; & everyone was running to welcome her Home tho' she had been only away a couple of weeks. I was not here long when she sent me up a present of 3 y<sup>ds</sup> of pink satin ribbon & 3 y<sup>ds</sup> more of scarlet & yellow & a beautiful Silk Shawl border'd all round with white & blue. This was the day after a dance that her Maids gave that she herself & all the Ladies came to look at. The Princess sent me over word that I must dance as well as the rest ; & so, as my Mistress bid me, I was glad enough & I never *tuck* my feet from the ground till I danced down 5 of the Girls. No Men at all danced, only ourselves. That was not all, but in a little while afterwards she sent Martishka & me a present of elegant Gowns, twill'd Calico ; the whole peice was given between us, a pale green & blue stripe.

There is 16 Villages all belonging to the Princess here, & them that lives in them comes to the number of 3000 Men & Women, all her subjects and loving her as if she was their Mother. There is 200 servants that lives in & out of the House. She one Morning sent for me, & she was sitting in her own room about 7 o'clock in the Morn<sup>g</sup>. 'Ellen,' sais she, 'I believe you have none of the Money of my Country'. 'No Ma'am,' sais I. 'Well then,' sais she (looking as good humour'd as anything) 'you ought to know how to reckon, & so here are 20 roubles for you (each rouble is more than half a Crown), & they are in different kinds of Coin, you will learn to understand the value'. 'Ma'am,' sais I, 'I'm very much oblig'd to you,' & with that I kiss'd her hand. Oh I forgot to tell you that she put the money into a blue Purse work'd with gold & tied with white ribbon & 5 gold Tassels. I never seen such a purse, nor anything so handsome in my life ! I'll send my brother Mick something to remember me if ever the opportunity comes as my Mistress has promis'd me to let me know. Another turn, Miss Anna Petrovna, the Princess's Neice, took me up to her own room ! She does not know how to speak English, only 'How do you do ?' But she made signs to me, & I follow'd her & she went to her Desk & brought out a round ring with 3 rims of gold & put it on my finger, & then she laugh'd when I began to speak English to her, so I kiss'd her hand & made the best curtesy I could. And coming out she shew'd me a gown that one of her Maid Servants was embroidering in a Frame ; I never seen nicer work ! & she has promised my Mistress that one of these days her Maid should teach me to work in the same way. Another of them is the elegantest mantua maker, and Miss Matty's too ! They can sing & write & read & do many & many a thing very cleverly I'll engage.

Last night I got the message that my brother Martin sent in Mrs Wilmot's Letter. When he has time let him walk up with this & shew it to her with my respects & duty, if she cares to read it. This is the third long Letter I have written since I quit Glanmire—one to you, & the other to Miss Henrietta, & now this to you again. There is not a Sunday Morning that my Mistress don't ask me if I have been to prayers, & she would not be pleased at all if I miss them. Once besides in the Week I went for there is many & many a Holy day kept here. I told you before about

sending a Letter up to M<sup>r</sup> Wilmot if he will be so good as to send it with his own, & don't forget the lock of Miles's Hair & of my Mother's too. Tell my Mother not to be uneasy at all for I am happy enough & it will not be my fault if I am not so. Remember me to my Brother's Wife & to Nelly Cotty, & don't let Kitt forget to take this letter down to M<sup>rs</sup> Chetwood, a real friend sure enough she is to all the family, & I wou'd be glad she do be thinking of me sometimes & 't wou'd be *luck* to any Girl whether by Sea or Land. Remember me to M<sup>r</sup> Hayes the butler & M<sup>rs</sup> Mann; they wou'd be glad to hear how I do be doing. And remember me to M<sup>rs</sup> Wilmot's Sarvents, & above all to Nancy Thornton & Ann & Julia & also to M<sup>r</sup> Roach.

We'll all be *laiving* this the 13th of December for Moscow again where we are to stay three Months in the same Palace of the Princess I talk'd to you about. And God knows I never seen such a good Lady since ever I was born, nor so kind, nor so generous I've reason to say dear knows! Once every week there is a Play acted here in a nice little Play House belonging to the Princess. We are all given *laive* to go. 'tis the Sarvents who act just for her amusement.

That's all, dear Father. I've put into the Letter all I could think of. I wish you every good luck now you have changed to Cork.

& believe me your dutiful daughter

ELEANOR CAVANAGH

There's another thing to put in. One of the Maids made me a present of a Necklace, but my Mistress made me give it back again; for sais she (true enough) 'what wou'd your Father say if you *dizen'd* yourself up with such nonsense!' So I gave it back again, & I never changes my own way of dressing at all. The weather is not a bit colder yet a while & the Stoves make the Halls & rooms much warmer than Fires. They are lit once a day. We breakfast early & then dine at the Princess's own Table as soon as the Ladies & Gentlemen go into the Drawingroom. 'Tis wonderful how early they dine, always between one & two o'clock, so that the Girls & myself sits down at four, but none of the Men Sarvents, & I'll engage we live like Queens! 'Tis the same at supper, for we have one like a hot Dinner at 10 o'clock afterwards.

CATHERINE WILMOT TO ANNA CHETWOOD

Sep<sup>r</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> TROITSKOE

“ A few days ago I sent a Letter to you tagged with a promise at the end that you should see me again *at Philippi*.<sup>1</sup> So rather than belie my parting words I am come shivering to you this Autumn feeling day somewhat cross in myself & shrunk out of humour with the Old Style of reckoning for retarding the charity of the Stoves. Not that the weather by the by is a particle colder than in England ; & since Cold is the order of the day you may take this passing remark that habit has no power of reconciling one to the inclemency of the Climate, at least Matty says she felt the *second* winter like the evaporation of saltpeter upon the surface of her skin in comparison of the *first* which she scarcely minded, & now *she* is cover'd with wadded Cloaths while *I* have no necessity for putting on additional Cloathing, & when the Princess is unconscious that it is not a summer's day ! I must growl now at another thing which nothing on Earth can ever reconcile me to & which galls me to death I honestly own—& that is the distribution of time. We assemble at 9 in the Morn<sup>g</sup> to drink our Coffee attended by *Filles de Chambres*, & then what with lounging or talking or music or walking most frequently a couple of hours are spent Lord knows how ! Then instead of picking up lost time from that till 5 o'clock, the thunder of the dinner Bell (like the death signal to all occupation & leisure) sounds at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past one or 2 o'clock at farthest, & we assemble to solemnise our long repast where each several dish of 2 courses & a dessert are not only carved on another Table & handed to you but you are expected to eat of them all without mercy. This is one of the Princess's particularities. Everything is better dress'd & done than anywhere else & she prides herself on the produce of her Farm, Dairy, Gardens, Hot Houses, Pineries, &c. &c. I have acquired a passion for the drink of this country call'd *Quass* which is intolerable to everywhere but here but which I like better than Champagne. Honey with fresh Cucumbers is a favorite dish, preserved Dates, Apple bread, young Pig & Cold Cream, Egg Paties eat with Soup, another

<sup>1</sup> The letter alluded to here never arrived.

Soup made of Fish, & every sort of Sallad & eat Cold. In fact there is no end to the whimsical varieties that a Russian Kitchen furnishes peculiar to itself together with imitations from every other in the World. But to return to the disposition of Time. Dinner breaks in compleatly upon the Day, & 'tis difficult to return to one's Morning's avocations. Tea then assembles the family again at 6 o'clock, & a prodigious hot supper at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 9 or 10. Well, it can't be help'd !

So now to return back to Moscow where I forgot to mention a sight we saw, namely a combat of Bears. It was the day we drove 7 versts out of Town to ' the Hill of the Sparrows ' in order to view the Town from an Eminence, an object which would recompence one for a Journey not of 7 but 70 versts if necessary ! The number of Churches all cover'd over in Cupolas with Metal & many with pure dutch gold give the chief beauty to the *coup d'oeil* —600 of these blaze like so many Suns & are contrasted to the green of the Public Gardens which everywhere abound. The grand defect of Russia in a picturesque point of view is rectified a little in the Environs of Moscow, & that is its exceeding flatness. The inequalities therefore I dare say are here admired & prized much above their value & real pretention ; nevertheless one may safely praise its beauty as we view'd it from the Hill of Sparrows which commands the Town like a Panorama. The officers who conducted us, perceiving they were only Bear leaders to the expedition, revenged themselves by proposing to introduce us into a Theatre built on purpose for the savage amusement of worrying those enormous clumsy Beasts to death by enormous bull Dogs. Let it be buried however in eternal oblivion in your faithful Ear that Anna Petrovna, Matty & I had the abominable Cruelty to permit a Combat should take place on purpose for ourselves, & up we mounted on a sort of Scaffolding form'd into temporary Boxes & view'd the Dogs beneath chain'd in their respective Cells & howling like so many Demons with the glory of meeting the impending Bruin ! Half a dozen bearded Keepers presently appear'd hawling out a prodigious Bear growling at the end of a Chain which they fasten'd to an iron Ring in the centre of the Arena. One of the furious Dogs was then conducted by a Chain to the Encounter. The terror of the sight & horror of the cries of death (as they sounded to my ears) frighten'd me to such a



night if I felt myself indisposed to proceed farther. This was out of the Gates a few Versts & so apparently in the country that I had not the slightest perception of anything like Habitations till this adventure made me look for a House which ought to appertain to a Wood of Pines by the Roadside, & half hid amongst them I first discover'd my hospitable Lady of the Waving Handkerchief & golden salver bowing from the Balcony.

Russia is yet barbarous enough to be distinguish'd for her Hospitality. She has many other Nationalitys no doubt, but my experience has not been able to distinguish any excepting amongst the lower orders of People, for with respect to the higher I am sorry to say they imitate the French in everything! And tho' the French manners are appropriate to themselves I can't endure the *singerie* of *Bruin* when he frolicks with the Monkey on his back! Instead therefore of the dignified Salutation of former times (namely of bowing seriously to one another *till their Crowns met together*) you are kiss'd on both your cheeks with the appearance of transport & are told mechanically how enchanted they are to make your acquaintance &c. &c. &c. The dress too is a bad imitation of the French & they have universally adopted their Language! One is more surprised at finding this the case at Moscow than at Petersburg, for in fact Petersburg is a medley of foreigners; but Fashion does the same in one place that commercial necessity occasions in the other, & in the midst of this adoption of manners, customs & language there is something childishly Silly in their reproaching Buonaparte when they can't eat their dinners without a french Cook to dress it, when they can't educate their Children without unprincipled adventurers from Paris to act as Tutors and Governesses, when every House of consequence (that I have seen at least) has an outcast Frenchman to instruct the Heir apparent—in a word, when every association of fashion, luxury, elegance, & fascination is drawn from France; & in this obliteration of themselves a dying squeak against Buonaparte redeems them in their own Eyes from this Political Suicide! Such arrant folly! Nevertheless as an indifferent person I would rather be in a French Drawing room than any other (a preference which a bad imitation forces on ones choice) for tho' the Russians cram ones carcass rarely they send your Mind to France utterly unconscious of the degradation to themselves or to their Country! The National

music, the national Dancing, the national Salutation, the national dress & the national Language have all sunk down to the Ground & none but Slaves practice any ! What I have seen therefore has been a superstructure from France—the Monkey rampant on the Bear's back !

How I abhor these *general observations* arising from such circumscribed experience as mine, & I don't know what induces me to budge from the detail of Gossip ! Strange to say this same Gossip wou'd lead me chiefly to talk of Princess Daschkaw's Character (as I know more of hers than anyone else's) which is diametrically opposite to all *singerie* for if ever there was an Original upon the face of the Earth it is herself ; & yet the spirit of opposition bears me off from her & the Groves of Troitskoe to Moscow & its golden Cupolas where I spent only 3 days ! But to tell the truth I am gasping to go back there again, so to forestall our return which will not be for 2 months I will whisk you *volens volens* to the handsome Widow Nebalsin's Circular Room (so often mention'd in Matty's Letters) where P<sup>ss</sup> Daschkaw in full Star & Garter usher'd Anna Petrovna Matty & me after the Play. M<sup>me</sup> Nebalsin said she was overwhelm'd with mortification at not receiving me at a *fête* which she had design'd for my arrival but which our leaving Town the next day prevented. She added, ' Mavra Romanovna (Matty) *est un ange*, & I cannot love or honour her too much. Your passport to my Friendship & affection is your being her sister ! ' She then threw her rosy fat arms about Matty's neck & congratulated her, while Congratulation was good, on my safety & promis'd me Bushels of Friendship which she anticipated with joy, recommending herself to my affection & kissing me till my Heart was fairly broke & till I inwardly wish'd that ones Friendship was not to be collar'd like a vagabond in that manner whether one was in the humour for it or not. (Don't be afraid for I behaved very decently & swore horribly in the sacred cause ! )

The Princess, lovely oddity, instantly set about manufacturing a prodigious Russian eulogium (which Matty understood & told me afterwards) puffing of my qualifications to such a pitch that the circle about her were completely mute, & I not comprehending a syllable quietly stroll'd up & down the room with Anna Petrovna, excellent Soul, amusing myself with the paintings in Fresco



night if I felt myself indisposed to proceed farther. This was out of the Gates a few Versts & so apparently in the country that I had not the slightest perception of anything like Habitations till this adventure made me look for a House which ought to appertain to a Wood of Pines by the Roadside, & half hid amongst them I first discover'd my hospitable Lady of the Waving Handkerchief & golden salver bowing from the Balcony.

Russia is yet barbarous enough to be distinguish'd for her Hospitality. She has many other Nationalitys no doubt, but my experience has not been able to distinguish any excepting amongst the lower orders of People, for with respect to the higher I am sorry to say they imitate the French in everything! And tho' the French manners are appropriate to themselves I can't endure the *singerie* of *Bruin* when he frolicks with the Monkey on his back! Instead therefore of the dignified Salutation of former times (namely of bowing seriously to one another *till their Crowns met together*) you are kiss'd on both your cheeks with the appearance of transport & are told mechanically how enchanted they are to make your acquaintance &c. &c. &c. The dress too is a bad imitation of the French & they have universally adopted their Language! One is more surprised at finding this the case at Moscow than at Petersburg, for in fact Petersburg is a medley of foreigners; but Fashion does the same in one place that commercial necessity occasions in the other, & in the midst of this adoption of manners, customs & language there is something childishly Silly in their reprobatng Buonaparte when they can't eat their dinners without a french Cook to dress it, when they can't educate their Children without unprincipled adventurers from Paris to act as Tutors and Governesses, when every House of consequence (that I have seen at least) has an outcast Frenchman to instruct the Heir apparent—in a word, when every association of fashion, luxury, elegance, & fascination is drawn from France; & in this obliteration of themselves a dying squeak against Buonaparte redeems them in their own Eyes from this Political Suicide! Such arrant folly! Nevertheless as an indifferent person I would rather be in a French Drawing room than any other (a preference which a bad imitation forces on ones choice) for tho' the Russians cram ones carcass rarely they send your Mind to France utterly unconscious of the degradation to themselves or to their Country! The National

music, the national Dancing, the national Salutation, the national dress & the national Language have all sunk down to the Ground & none but Slaves practice any ! What I have seen therefore has been a superstructure from France—the Monkey rampant on the Bear's back !

How I abhor these *general observations* arising from such circumscribed experience as mine, & I don't know what induces me to budge from the detail of Gossip ! Strange to say this same Gossip wou'd lead me chiefly to talk of Princess Daschkaw's Character (as I know more of hers than anyone else's) which is diametrically opposite to all *singerie* for if ever there was an Original upon the face of the Earth it is herself ; & yet the spirit of opposition bears me off from her & the Groves of Troitskoe to Moscow & its golden Cupolas where I spent only 3 days ! But to tell the truth I am gasping to go back there again, so to forestall our return which will not be for 2 months I will whisk you *volens volens* to the handsome Widow Nebalsin's Circular Room (so often mention'd in Matty's Letters) where P<sup>ss</sup> Daschkaw in full Star & Garter usher'd Anna Petrovna Matty & me after the Play. M<sup>me</sup> Nebalsin said she was overwhelm'd with mortification at not receiving me at a *fête* which she had design'd for my arrival but which our leaving Town the next day prevented. She added, 'Mavra Romanovna (Matty) *est un ange*, & I cannot love or honour her too much. Your passport to my Friendship & affection is your being her sister !' She then threw her rosy fat arms about Matty's neck & congratulated her, while Congratulation was good, on my safety & promis'd me Bushels of Friendship which she anticipated with joy, recommending herself to my affection & kissing me till my Heart was fairly broke & till I inwardly wish'd that ones Friendship was not to be collar'd like a vagabond in that manner whether one was in the humour for it or not. (Don't be afraid for I behaved very decently & swore horribly in the sacred cause !)

The Princess, lovely oddity, instantly set about manufacturing a prodigious Russian eulogium (which Matty understood & told me afterwards) puffing of my qualifications to such a pitch that the circle about her were completely mute, & I not comprehending a syllable quietly stroll'd up & down the room with Anna Petrovna, excellent Soul, amusing myself with the paintings in Fresco

against the Wall. Supper was announc'd & during the time P<sup>ss</sup> Daschkaw frequently talk'd to me in English & then translated everything into Russ for the benefit of the Widow embellishing to a marvellous degree for I was astonish'd at finding the most commonplace observation of mine receiv'd by virtue of my Interpreter with amusement & admiration of countenance on the part of the audience ! These things I mention to give you a perfect notion of the Blessed Princess, & tho' she uniformly behaves to us in this manner she exacts (from Imperial habits I suppose) a sort of deference that surprised me excessively at first from her Country People ! For example, No Man tho' cover'd with Stars attempts to sit down in her presence without being desired, & this not always being requested I have seen half a dozen Princes stand out an entire visit. Once I saw them *bow'd* out of the room when she got deadly tired of them, & after giving them her Hand to kiss they disappear'd. It never enters into her head or heart to disguise any sentiment or impulse from either, & therefore you may guess what a privileged sort of Mortal she makes herself ! The Truth is sure to come out whether agreeable or disagreeable, & lucky it is she has sensibility & gentleness of Nature, for if she had not she wou'd be a Public Scourge ! She is the first by right, rank, sense & habit in every Company ; & prerogative becomes such a matter of course that nothing appears extraordinary that she does. I mention'd in my last Letter the circumstance of her transforming the Drawing room at Count [blank in MS.] into a Bedchamber for my accommodation. Well, another thing she did was to call out at supper for a basket which she kept on her Lap & stored full of Pine Apple, Peaches, Grapes &c. ordering it to be left on her dressing Table, & guess what this was for ! Because she heard me say I was not fond of Fruit except before Breakfast, and she would not break through the habit she had establish'd of waking me (by one of her *Femmes de Chambre*) with this offering, a ceremony she has never omitted a single morning since I came. I expostulated a little, but the answer I always get on these occasions is ' Rest tranquil my sweet Friend ! dease 'ittle testimonies *sont les besoins de mon coeur* '. Or else, ' Our younger sister (Matty) must be humour'd. She would scold me if I was not to do my duty.' In short 'tis endless to detail the hourly marks of her affection & attention not to say adoration for Matty.

Yesterday a tributary Jew or Prince or somebody from abroad sent her a new fashion'd long Schawl embroider'd in Floss yellow silk. 'One must return de favor of ones Friend, and he will feel how I honor him for tinkin' his poor Shawl wordey of being accepted by my Angel Child.' These were her words when she wound it round Matty's Shoulders. She is planning another picture of Matty. One she wears on her snuff-box, another as large as life hangs in her Bedchamber here, & a third also as large as life (both three quarter'd) is the principal object in her drawing room at Moscow. These (two of them) are elegant looking and exquisitely dress'd, none however strikingly like. Oh, that abomination that my Mother has got ! Matty has promised me to have a good one copied this Winter & sent home in Spring for the Drawing room or Music room at home on condition that the other is destroy'd. One of the Princess's persuasions is that Matty is a perfect beauty. To doubt this is Heresy ! And as all the varieties are not expressed in one single Picture I have no doubt that before she stops a dozen will be drawn ! Anna Petrovna & I (neither of whom Lord help us have perform'd any Metamorphosis since our birth) take her on the grounds of a Venus de Medicis ! You know *my* high opinion of Matty has ever been notorious ! You may swear in the extraordinary circumstances under which she came to Russia (and still more into so extraordinary and complicated a family) that her conduct and sense must have play'd a distinguish'd part ! These qualities have not lain dormant on any subject whatsoever at any time, nor with any branch of the House of Daschkaw ; and I have every reason to think that great as the Princess's partiality is Justice is barely compensated by her devotion, admiration, respect and adulation of *her* Character.

I do not speak from partiality, and here comes a proof of handsome conduct on the part of the Princess which still has had its ballance. The Princess sent up a parcel seal'd and a memorandum on the outside that it contains £13,000. Here are the words written on the back in the Princess's hand : ' I beseech you not to open this Pacquet but after my death, and then accept the Contents from a friend, a Mother who *taught* herself under a great obligation to you and who loved you most tenderly.' Matty, expostulated, wrote, talk'd, cried, & in short ended by writing these words on the other side : ' If I die before my beloved

Princess Daschkaw I bequeath this Pacquet to her, and in case of her refusing to accept it I leave it as a testimony of my esteem to the Prince Daschkaw her son. Martha Wilmot.' So ends the affair, and there the Pacquet lies in Matty's strong Box.<sup>1</sup> This transaction took place 22<sup>nd</sup> August, the day before they set out to meet me at Moscow. Since I am on the subject of presents I must mention a gorgeous gold snuff Box with the Empress's Picture emboss'd which Matty was obliged to accept, a collection of gems in the line of Natural History, a collection of Coins, a collection of Medals, and little *odd come dods* from Herculeaneum, two gold lion headed clasps taken from the golden hoards of Tartars (conquer'd many years ago by the Russians and exterminated by John the Terrible), also a full suit of Russian Costume worn at Court by Princess Daschkaw, Agate snuff Bux, blood stone ditto, a comb, broach, band for the head, necklace, and three rings of Torquoise. This set of ornaments are sentimentally arranged in pearls and topas's in a wreath so as to resemble the little flowers call'd *Forget me not*. She has also given her a lovely Watch (tho' she had one of her own), gold Venetian chains and myriads of Seals, a gold comb, a gold and pearl crescent, eighteen different rings, exquisite cornelian earrings like bunches of red currants, pearl necklace and bracelets, beautiful ones, coral ones, amber ones &c. &c. a small Pianoforté, a beautiful Guitar, quantities of music, silver cups, boxes without end &c. &c. Then as to cloaths I literally believe she has satin dresses of every colour

<sup>1</sup> A letter from the Princess which followed the packet read as follows :

"I can never repay you, my Dear charming child, the obligations I feel with pleasure I owe to you. You have gladen my Last days, your Society was a balm to me. Esteem, friendship and admiration are the Sentiments I have for you ; I can not say enough to do Justice to my feelings and to your worth.

As you promised me not to open this pacquet before I am gone to a better world, I beg you will not grieve too much for my Loss. You have worthy and Tender parents. May you Long Enjoy all you deserve. Dont forget intirely your Sincere friend I dare say the good Daschkaw, but do not morn her Death, as Life was not happiness to her. Accept the trifling inclosed. I have ordered you should have the choice out of all my Carriages here or at Moscow for your journey to Petersb. There you will sell it for to defray your passage by sea. Adieu good exsellent child, my blessing and prayers will attend you from the place I will be in rest."

The above letter in Princess Daschkaw's handwriting is preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy.

under the sun, mock lace dresses, a real black lace veil, which covers her from head to foot, velvet dresses, crape ones, muffs, pelices &c. &c. and a library of more than 150 valuable books, maps &c. &c. 'Tis all a chance when she gets really valuable things, for whether it is a diamond or a flower I think the Princess seems to know no difference and would not give it if she thought there was any other value attached than what her affection insures.

*Oct<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup>*

"No 'tis folly to talk ! Write I cannot here ! You bid me keep a journal for example, and not an attempt of that nature have I made. Cold does not now molest me for our stoves are lovelyly lit and our apartments excessively comfortable. Well my dear it can't be help'd. What will I be after saying to you ? I believe I never mention'd Troitska. It is a fine place, the Princess has made it herself, and situated in the midst of 16 Villages belonging to her. Three thousand Peasants, 'my subjects' (as she calls them) live most happily under her absolute power ; and of all the blessed hearted beings that ever existed on that subject she is the most blessed (excepting your Mother). There are two hundred servants, taking in all denominations inside and outside, in this establishment, more than a hundred horses, two hundred stock of cows, and everything else in proportion. The Church establishment too belongs to her, and is built at the back of the House. A lovely wood belonging to the estate 9 miles long and 4 broad is within a few yards of the place inhabited by Wolves, and in it the Princess and I lost our way yesterday even<sup>g</sup> for an hour and half. A beautiful river winds all through the grounds and serpentine amidst the entire estate. However Troitska is a dead flat almost, and to the cultivation alone its beauty is attributable. An immense quantity of ground is laid out under shrubberies and all sorts of pleasure grounds completely in the English stile. The House is enormous with wings on either side which are only connected by balconies raised on iron railings up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Story. Matty and I inhabit one of these wings and Anna Petrovna the other. 20 bearded Men are now busily employ'd in making a temporary wooden passage from the hall door to the door of our Castle, as in winter (strange to say) they had provided for no

internal communication so much was sacrificed to the appearance of the outside.

There are a hundred whimsical and most ridiculous peculiarities of custom, such as letting you provide your own bed cloaths, in a Palace even ! We have our own sheets, blankets and Quilts which we give to the washerwoman with our wearing apparel, and they would look upon one as extraordinary to expect the House was to provide for these things, as you would if I laid myself up at Glanmire and sent for your gown to wear as a matter of right. (Black enough you'd look at me and soon enough you'd shew me the door in case of such an outrage ! ) In fact this system of each person having a separate little establishment is observ'd in more ways than that, for saucepans, candles, candlesticks, tea and coffee equipage and a hundred &c. &c. are regularly found in the care of the *Femmes de Chambre* ; and I might lock my Castle door, or Anna Petrovna or Matty, and we have provisions to keep the Citadel a week in flourishing health. The system of hoards is without bounds, and presents appropriate to this comical system are perfectly the fashion. The Princess sent up a pair of silver candlesticks on our arrival here and a store of wax candles ! I expected a spit or gridiron next, but tho' not exactly so we all got presents of iron pans the following day. Oh, this business of presents ! When I left London I laid in as many beads, necklaces, and trinkets as if I was going to trade with Otahiete, and they are almost exhausted already amongst the band of Damsels who attend the Chambers fair. To be sure Eleanor comes in for costly offerings in return, but it is a torment and horrid waste of money, for bawbles accumulate without mercy ; and besides one scarcely has the liberty of choice as on certain days they must be given and receiv'd or else outrage the customs of the Country and give universal offence. Matty has already provided 14 volumes beautifully bound in green and gold for Anna Petrovna's Easter gift ; she has seen them and look'd them over, but till the day comes she is not to receive or acknowledge them.

In the midst of this immense Establishment and in the center of riches and honours I wish you were to see the Princess go out to take a walk, or rather to look over her subjects ! An old brown great coat and a silk handkerchief about her neck worn to rags is her dress, & well may it be worn to rags for she has worn it 18

years and will continue to do so as long as she lives, because it belong'd to M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton. Her originality, her appearance, her manner of speaking, her doing every description of thing, (for she helps the masons to build walls, she assists with her own hands in making the roads, she feeds the cows, she composes music, she sings & plays, she writes for the press, she shells the corn, she talks out loud in Church and corrects the Priest if he is not devout, she talks out loud in her little Theatre and puts in the Performers when they are out in their parts, she is a Doctor, an Apothecary, a Surgeon, a Farrier, a Carpenter, a Magistrate, a Lawyer ; in short she hourly practices every species of incongruity, corresponds with her brother, who holds the first post in the Empire, on his trade, with Authors, with Philosophers, with Jews, with Poets, with her Son, with all her Relations, and yet appears as if she had her time a burthen on her hands) altogether gives me eternally the idea of her being a Fairy ! And I protest it is not jokingly I say so, for the impression never quits me for a moment. The marvellous contradiction too of her speaking like an Infant in her broken english and with her unaccountable expressions ! She is unconscious whether she speaks French, English or Russian, and mingles these in every sentence. She speaks German and Italien equally well, but her pronunciation is not clear which takes from the pleasure I shou'd otherwise receive from her conversation. I have just finish'd reading Voltaire's, Diderot's, Garrick's & the Abbé Raynall's letters to her. She has promised me the Empress Catherine's, and I have also read a good part of her life written by herself. Indeed it is necessary to qualify oneself with the knowledge of public things and characters in Russia since the time of Catherine, since the Princess alludes to them perpetually and her mind wanders so naturally back to the Court & Study & Toilet & Boudoir of Catherine that I am beginning to fancy I recollect her habits of life & conversation & that *I* was a party concern'd in the revolution. By the by, the principal reception room at Troitska is ornamented with an immense picture of Catherine on Horseback in Uniform taken the very day of her husband's destruction, & the P<sup>ss</sup> says a perfect resemblance. Besides this there are Portraits of her in every room.

Yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup> when I went down to breakfast I saw the Princess fuming over the Herring which she was preparing for me



to swallow, as I had been heard to complain in the secret recesses of my Castle of an uncomfortable feel in my Stomach, and the Fairy knew it by inspiration & did cause a Fish to rise from its troubled waters and dissipate, perforce of Magic, my derangement ! I happen'd to come down before Matty, and the flash of terror that appear'd in her Eyes frighten'd me out of my wits for a moment. On enquiry it proved to be her anguish at the notion of Matty's perhaps being unwell, and her expression was, '*de taught cut my Heart like a sharp Knife*'.

I am sure you must by this time be deadly tired of this Castle & its Fairy, & we will leave them, tho' 'tis 'unknownst to the Globe' the secrets of the Place & the Necromancy of the Labyrinth into which your Eye can never penetrate, nor can your profane Ear imbibe the Rhunick mystery of the Northern Star ! Yea, even already too much have I utter'd, for from a Deity, which presides in every room & who watches over my thoughts, words & actions, do I hear breathings of discontent ! '*Bog*' is its name, a Scarlet Mantle doth cover it, dire is the expression of its yellow Countenance, and Death gleams in the threatenings of its Eye !

Eleanor is this moment that she sees me writing desirous to know 'whether Miss Henrietta got her letter safe' for you must know she wrote a sort of Epistle to her when she was at Petersburg. Tell her People that she is very well & picking up the language. She had danced Gloriously at two Balls given by the first *Fille de Chambre* & is to exhibit again on St Katherine's Day, *Le Jour de Nom* of the Princess & also my *Jour de Nom* for she is call'd *Ekaterina Romanovna* and I am known by no other appellation.

October 2<sup>nd</sup>

" Good bye to you, and for many a long day, for I am so mortified in being oblig'd to send such broken scatter-brain'd Epistles that hang me if I put pen to paper again while I remain at Troitska, excepting to announce my *petrefaction* if it takes place according to promise. *Petrefaction* brings hot water into my head and this reminds me of the Bath Establishment in the Shrubbery here which is lovely & most perfectly arranged. The Women have nothing else to do but to heat the Furnace & keep everything in order, and you know Bathing is with the Russians as with the Turks a religious observance as not one of the lower order would

or could profane the Church without having been in the Hot Bath the Night before. This secures a universal ablution every Saturday regularly. The Bath here has three separate Chambers. In one is a gradation of stairs to increase the heat of a Vapour Bath if you like it. There is also a great Tub in which one sits up to the Chin & the Ceremony is to scour oneself with Horse-reddish till you smart & then with Soap. You should first sit up to your knees in a composition of wormwood Nettles, Grass-seed, Mint, & Horsereddish ! I have gone through this operation frequently. The P<sup>ss</sup> always goes to bed after bathing. One is prepared in an adjoining Chamber, but I go walk about and only feel the stronger.

The Princess, sweet Woman, has promised me—laughing most heartily at the thoughts of what with any one else would be nothing & yet from her methodical & clockwork habits of life is a real sacrifice—to leave Troitska *two days* sooner than she ever did before in order to go to Moscow & shew me the Lions. She says Count Alexis Orloff shall give a Ball ! On these occasions she sends her order & the Ball is given as a matter of allegiance. She has also promised that Concerts shall be given at her House. She promises too to take me to the Kremlin & order the Archbishop of Georgia to prepare a feast for the occasion. The Kremlin you know is in the middle of the Town of Moscow, a Town in itself Containing all the Religion of the Empire. To be sure there never were strangers more capitally circumstanced for seeing all that is to be seen than we are. I am longing to go to Moscow. Amongst other things she wanted to take me into Poland in Spring, but this I sturdily refused as travelling is dangerous for her internal disorders. This I had long known & wrote to her from St Petersburg to intreat she would not leave Troitska on my account, but nothing could stop her nor any selfish consideration impede for one moment her resolution of giving me the reception she had design'd.

Don't irritate me by saying you suppose I am beginning to speak the language. No ! Let that satisfy you for ever. I feel my power of *Duncishness* increase daily, my powers of idleness, & my powers of hopelessness on everything that's good ! So God be with you. No so Matty. She writes & speaks Russ wonderfully. The Princess teaches her & they correspond in Russian notes every day almost.

I must fly ! I see the Fairy beckoning me with her Wand, & nobody knows what Necromancy she is after ! Bog waves his beard at me ! . . . It is accomplished. An hour has past ! But it is not given me to impart the secret, even to your faithful Ear ! No ! I must forever consign it to black & most profound mystery. Adieu Friend !

TO HER SISTER ALICIA

TROITSKOE. *December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1805*

“ Hold your tongue Alicia ! I know I am in Russia, and that you fancy the Lord of his infinite mercy sent me here for your edification & amusement—as a Sweep is hustled up the Chimney to hoot & squeak from the top of the House & flourish his sooty brush as a symbol of his victory to the Blackguards in the Streets ! Once for all I tell you I cannot either hoot or squeak or flourish my brush or grin with triumph or shake my bag of soot about the Neighbourhood. No, not even if you were to burn a faggot at my heels & send me scrambling head foremost up the Chimney for my Life ! . . . And whatever the Monotony of our Arcadian lives in this sequester’d Castle presents shall act as the sleepy incentive to this Epistle ! For one inch shall not your imagination budge beyond the blank circumference of snow which encircles our wide Horizon & which the Shroudings of the Night & nakedness of Day alone Diversifies to our view. . . .

I told you I believe that Troitskoe was circumstanc’d like a sprig of Lily of the Valley, that is the white stucco’d House is shaded with a dark spreading Forest of seven miles breadth. Into this we regularly penetrate on our sledges drawn by three Horses abreast full speed surging us through the snow like a Boat breaking through the waves, and sending up a sparkling spray which makes us move in an atmosphere of Diamonds. The opening of the Forest is like the Charnel House of Nature ! Every Tree rattles like a bleach’d Skeleton, moaning, hollow, gaunt, and menacing, till we lose the Apparition by bursting our way through towering Firs whose Pyramidical shafts swell into Columns of snow & flit in thousands of marble Pillars before our watry Eyes which, as the bitter effect of the atmosphere, gives perhaps an illusive medium to reality. The Underwood, feather’d like a Swansdown

on the wirey branches, trembles under the weight of Snowy Tufts, so precisely resembling Guilda Roses that in their instance Winter outvies the Garlands of the brightest Summer. Nor is the gilding of the setting Sun less diversifying, for so surely as a horizontal beam strikes upon the snow it seems to awaken all the treasures of Golconda, and the ground blazes in Sapphires, Emeralds, Amethysts, Opals and Brilliants. The Solitude of this Forest, which in the Night is broken sometimes by the marauding of the Wolves, is seldom interrupted in *our* course, excepting by Wood cutters who look like Satyrs rather than human beings & whose endless Beards, clogg'd in snow and lengthen'd by icicles, crackle in responsive measure to their Hatchets' strokes. The appearance of the Ladies of the Castle however—like Magic—suspends all labour, and till the Traineau is out of sight a circle of these Shaggy Satyrs clothed in the skins of Beasts with Fur nightcaps in their paws assemble to shew their devotion & reverence by bowing repeatedly their *bear* heads to the ground. There is no possibility hardly of distinguishing the Women from the Men excepting for the Headdress. It differs in every Government, even in every village sometimes, and here it is precisely like a pair of budding Horns subdued by bandages which nevertheless are gaudily decorated with gold & spangles & a deep fringe of little beads upon their Pole in place of hair. *That* never is seen by human Eye after the Ceremony of Marriage takes place.

Well you are tired of the Forest, and you are properly encouraged for your inquisitiveness about outlandish countrys ! See what it is to extort truth from travellers ! Tremble then at Wolves & Clovenfooted Satyrs to all Eternity ! Should the tingling of your curiosity however overcome you so uncontrollably as that you must needs know what the Volly of Smoke is issuing from that heap of Snow, learn that what appears to your Eyes but the heaving of the ground is in fact a Bath which is heated every Saturday for the benefit of the Familys in the adjoining Cottages, & every village throughout the Empire has two, three, or more similar Baths attach'd to them.

You perceive here we drive in by the back of the House that wide range of Buildings, which hems in the Lawn circularly & in the midst of which the Church stands, must be accounted for as appurtenances to the Castle, or else you might mistake it for a

little town. One is a Theatre, another a riding school, a 3<sup>rd</sup> an Infirmary, a 4<sup>th</sup> the Stables, a 5<sup>th</sup> the Steward's House, a 6<sup>th</sup> a House for Guests, a 7<sup>th</sup> a House for a gigantic English Bull, an 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> for servants & so on.

' Mercy on us. What a Wilderness of a looking Hall here is ! ' No wonder it should be so when it is the eternal passage of a swarm of servants ! You must let that triangular looking Stepousha, blinking behind his cravat, help you off with your mufflements, while Affanasia takes off Your Fur boots and while Vinsens, Masayee, Kusma, Bessilkin, Vassilee, Kashan, Prokev, Antoine, Timothée and half a score others of different Shapes & Colours run to usher you into the dining room exactly opposite the Hall door, and so from the left of the dining parlour into the usual sitting room. The furniture of this room is red morocco leather & gold. . . . That portrait at the head of the room hanging over the Sopha is Princess Daschkaw's husband who was reckon'd the beauty of his time and who died when he was only six and twenty years of age !<sup>1</sup> That commanding looking dame with eagles embroider'd on her train & an ermine Robe is Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Russia, & opposite is her grandson Alexander 1<sup>st</sup> in all his Imperial dignities. So far for Pictures. At the upper end of the Room sitting in an arm Chair with a little Table before her inlaid like a Chess board, lounging in a simple purple dressing gown & white cambric Man's nightcap, with her black Dog Fidelle sleeping on a cushion at her feet, is the Princess ! She is waiting for our return home as this Evening is to be dedicated to reading over some dozen Letters she has tied up in that great paper parcel—the successive Correspondence that pass'd between her & Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup> from the time she was 18 years of age till she resign'd the Academy. These subjects as ripping up a life that is almost past gives a painful sort of agitated animation to her Countenance, & I long till it is over. Anna Petrovna has already taken up her station and prepared her great Worsted knitting.

<sup>1</sup> Prince Kodrat (Michael) Daschkaw (1736-1764), Russian soldier. Son of Prince Ivan Daschkaw and his wife, Anastasia, daughter of General Michael Leontieff. His mother was a niece of Peter the Great's wife, Natalie Narishkin. In 1759 he married Princess Daschkaw. Was nominated Russian Ambassador to Turkey during the reign of Peter III ; and on the accession of Catherine II he was sent at the head of a regiment to support the election of Stanislaus Poniatowsky to the Polish throne. He died suddenly whilst on the march in Poland.

*Sunday. Dec<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>*

“ You perceive 5 days have pass’d since I was interrupted, and till this morning that suddenly this sheet of paper fell out of my desk I forgot it was in existence. Within this time Saint Katherine, the patron Saint of Princess Daschkaw, has walk’d in amongst us to gather her taxes & exact her perquisites both temporal & spiritual. The Princess and I being Namesakes she was resolved this Fête should be double celebrated, & therefore the eve of the day a solemn Mass was held for the beatification of our Souls. This was Thursday Evening and in the Dining Hall the Priests & Chaunters were all assembled with the incense & images. *Bog* was brilliantly illuminated, & the silver Image of Saint Katherine blaz’d before the Glass with her tributary lights. After this Ceremony was ended everybody of every description press’d forward to offer their Congratulations & presents. Peasants in tribes lined the Hall, each with a large loaf of Bread cover’d over with a heap of Salt which they offer’d as their homage & some a little plate of Apples to enhance the tribute. After this the Princess and I exchanged presents & both receiv’d those of Anna Petrovna & Matty. The Princess’s offering to me was most exquisite ; it was a mosaic snuff box set in Gold, the lid bearing in mosaic colouring the famous Roman Pyramid of Caius Cestus. . . . My offering to her was a large quilted green silk pocket book to write her Memorandums in, & the first page scrawl’d with the following garbage :

‘ As motionless and snowy as this page  
 Pigmalion’s work had shared Oblivion’s dower,  
 But that a kindling ray of roseate light  
 Woke it to thrilling life, with quickening power.  
 So will this little Book ! (now marble white)  
 If to its leaves one thought is e’er consign’d,  
 Vibrate th’ inspiring impulse Virtue gives,  
 And live—the heavenly record of Your Mind.’

K. WILMOT.

Remember this is a holy custom which is very holy that with the superabundance of its holiness it sanctifies even Folly itself, & therefore I don’t suppress that deplorable doggerel. . . . Anna Petrovna’s gift to the Princess was gold lace to untwist for Work and her gift to me a bottle of Attar of Roses, Matty’s gift to the

Princess a Flannel Nightgown & her gift to me a beautiful gold chain. That night's post brought Congratulatory Epistles from all the Princess's relations in Moscow *on the return of her Name's day*. So far for the Eve of St Katherine.

That night when we had retired to roost the Prince Daschkaw arrived and Mr de Postnicoff. The next day we went to Church & had appropriate Service. Count Santi arriv'd from Moscow by 12 o'clock ; he is a nephew of the Princess's. General Yellagin & his Family together with a good many of the Neighbours made their appearance soon after. You may fancy a great Dinner groaning under the Weight of Immolation, at the head of which the Princess sat & I at her right hand. *We* were to receive the Compliments of the Company conjointly which we did in Russ, French, & English, everyone standing up with a bumper of Champaign sparkling in his hand & congratulating us on *Our Saint* while they drank our health for the return of the day &c. &c. They all remain'd till late the next day. Music & Cards pass'd away the time, so here we are *just as we were* going to take a drive in the Forest. Friday we go to Moscow ; till then you are likely to put up with what you find at Troitskoe.

I don't believe I ever walk'd you up stairs ! Whisk the tail of your gown then, again, over your Shoulders and ascend these stone stairs. At the top of the 2<sup>nd</sup> flight turn to your left into the Antechamber. Those are all the old pictures of the House of Daschkaw & Worontzow. Now enter into the Drawing room, or rather public looking Ball room, for it is really magnificent. What a picture is that of Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup> on a grey Horse dress'd in the Uniform of the Guards as large as life, as she appear'd the famous 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1762, the day of the Russian Revolution ! Reflected in the opposite Looking Glass it appears galloping towards you, as your movements give it motion. That to the left is the King of Prussia, her contemporary ; & that again the unfortunate Stanislaus King of Poland. The floors are all inlaid with different Colour'd Wood as is most of the Furniture. Now pass into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Drawing room, 'tis lovely ! Only think of this extraordinary Princess, not only having plan'd the House herself but having assisted the Masons to build it *with her own hands*. Never mind the Suite of Rooms which follow, they are only Bed Chambers. But 'tis worth while going up stairs again to the Library

which contains I know not how many thousand Volumes in half a dozen Languages. The room commands a view of all the encircling Country and is supported by pillars each of which is in itself a little Library. Upstairs again is the Apothecary's Hall &c. &c.

There you are then in the Chimney like a Dwarf in a Marrow bone, and there you may stay with the million of Crows which are eternally flying about the roof of this House ! I don't pity you in the least. Take that for asking me to write you ' beautiful Russian Storys ' from the Solitudes of Troitskoe. Aye, stay where you are all night long & contemplate the Starry Heavens and the radiant Constellations of the North ! I know you are an Astronomer ! At least your companions the Crows have been ever famous for prediction, so that between you you may tell what that *Aurora borealis* augurs by tomorrow Morning, for at present I must go about my business & prepare some matters for a Moscow Carrier.

*Monday December 8<sup>th</sup>*

" I protest your *Cawing* has woke me this Morning out of my Slumbers ! Can't you spend a Night on the roof of a House without making such an uproar ? Come down stairs then into the Garden, or rather Shrubbery which is very pleasant to walk in as the walks are swept every day & the snow does not incommode one in the least. Besides if you feel it cold we can walk in the Orangerie. That winding walk among the birch trees is a favourite one of the Princess because of its leading to the Monument of Granite erected on a Mount and dedicated to the remembrance of the Catherine ascended the throne ! Behind it is scoop'd a Hermit's Cell furnish'd with moss & rocky seats out of which You plunge into the depth of a Wood ! But what nonsense to talk of Woods & Cells & winding walks in this Weather ! You had better return with me to my own room where I always breakfast & from whence I never descend till one or two o'clock to dinner. So now here we are, & I have to inform you for your welcome that I have a mind to leave you to your own inventions, for I protest I have not a word to throw at you ! . . .

Have you a fancy to eat your dinner ? No doubt you are ravenous after spending the night under the starry Firmament ! Run down stairs then & take your seat at the great square board. You



must first eat Egg patés with your Soup and then drink Hydromel to wash them down or else Quass. With your roasted meat you must eat Salt Cucumbers, & then Caviare made of the roe of Sturgeon. Young Pig & Curdled Cream is at Your service next, & lachat which is the general name for all grain baked with Cream. Fish soup do you chuse? Fowls? Game? Vegetables? or Apple bread? or raw Apples from the Crimea? or the Siberian Apples? or the transparent Apples? or the Kieff sweetmeat? or Honey comb? or preserved rose leaves, or pickled plums?

In the name of goodness eat no more, for in six or seven hours you will have to sit down to just such another dinner under the name of Supper! So, unless you go away with yourself, you must while they are perfuming the Rooms which suffocates me wander down the long passage into the Princess's Cabinet, sweet old Woman that she is! So I may say at least, & as for Matty there's no talking on that subject! The affectionate distinction & animated cordiality which has accompanied every word and action towards me ever since I first saw her has never had one moment's interruption. She calls me the sister of her choice, and added to the playfulness of her countenance & manner whenever she addresses me her ingenuity appears restless to search for circumstances to commend and flatter in everything touching myself, my Family, or my Country. Tho' I do her but common justice in mentioning these things, yet trust me I feel myself very little involv'd in the Main Spring of her conduct for being Matty's sister is in her eyes everything to irradiate Humanity into the beatification of a Ministering Angel of Light. Sometimes she exclaims with devotion when she looks at her 'Dare is de mark of Heaven's best love to me. My darling Child sought me out on de credit of my name & came by herself from distant Country in de faith of my Character! Now do tell me Sister *Kaiety* what shall I ever do to prove my love and gratitude to her?' Regularly every 3 or 4 days I am told the Story over & over again with renew'd energy. Perhaps you don't know that I mean my own name by spelling it as she pronounces it in her broken English 'Sister *Kaiety*', but the drollery this gives her conversation is inexpressible. I was call'd into her Cabinet the other day to read the dedication she had just finished to Matty of her History. It is written most elegantly; and the natural affection, admiration, gratitude, & enthusiasm it

breathes towards Matty certainly is the most noble testimonial that it is possible for one individual to pay another.<sup>1</sup>

I have since I came here often thought what a task it would be to attempt to draw the Character of the Princess Daschkaw ! I for my part think it would be absolutely impossible. Such are her peculiarities & inextricable varieties that the result would only appear like a Wisp of Human Contradictions. 'Tis the stuff we are all made of to be sure, but nevertheless nothing is more foreign from the thing itself than the raw materials of which it is made ! And woe betide individuality the moment one begins to generalize. You will always conceive her a piece of perfection when you take my experience of her, just as you would suppose Europe a Paradise if you never lived out of Italy & judged of the rest accordingly. But she has as many Climates to her mind, as many Splinters of insulation, as many Oceans of agitated uncertainty, as many Etnas of destructive fire and as many Wild Wastes of blighted Cultivation as exists in any quarter of the Globe ! For my part I think she would be most in her element at the *Helm of the State*, or Generalissimo of the Army, or Farmer General of the Empire. In fact she was born for business on a large scale which is not irreconcilable with the Life of a Woman who at 18 headed a Revolution & who for 12 years afterwards govern'd an Academy of Arts & Sciences. . . .

You will never believe me when I say the Princess has no sense of the ridiculous. I don't think She comprehends a Caricature even in language. A little instance pass'd yesterday at dinner. She told Matty it was a shame for her not to take snuff as she had 7 or 8 Imperial Boxes, & jokingly ask'd me what punishment she should inflict ! Anna Petrovna & I profoundly suggested that the Princess should serve Matty's Nose as she does her favorite Trees in the Shrubbery—Crop it till as many Noses sprang up in a Copse as she had gorgeous Snuff boxes. The Princess look'd ready to cry & thought us no better than Butchers. She instantly turn'd the Conversation.

*Saturday Night. Moscow. December 15<sup>th</sup>*

“ We are just arriv'd Here after the most dreadful Journey I ever made, but our joy in finding ourselves in Moscow is sadly

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 155.

alloy'd by the news which has just reach'd the Princess namely that her favorite Brother the Grand Chancellor is not expected to live<sup>1</sup>. . . This is a dreadful shock !

I must go to bed, my bones being in a jelly after the Roads which were broken & of course in hills & Vallies of ice !

To HER SISTER ALICIA

MOSCOW 18<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> 1806

" I know I am unsatisfactory & that I write but seldom, & seldom as it is ungratifying to the awful redundancy of your expectations which are like the many eyed Cherubim & the Six Winged Seraphim, monstrous even in the lustre of their motive which I doubt not springs from the Angelic Source of your anxiety about my precious health in these regions of White where amongst the sons & daughters of Winter I freeze in an unrelenting Snow. But amongst the upbraidings of your spirit I am not to be class'd amidst those perjured Souls whose promises are as a hot Iron brand upon their actions. If your Conscience is not turn'd into a Rhinocerus, you must remember that my parting word, yea my dying speech, was but a lively prognostication of what my Conduct has duly verified & shall verify till the returning Sun thaws a passage for me across the Baltic & replaces me in my *Gazebo* where bending like a Willow over Shandon Steeple my days, leaf by leaf, will drop into the Tomb. . . .

I was in the midst of your deathshead of a letter when Prince Yousoupoff came to hand me in to dinner, & while I walk'd with him in all his dignities of Stars & Garters thro' Suites of rooms, Winter Gardens and Galleries to the sound of Music I had leisure to ruminate on the blissful pictures you had conjured up before my mind. But I'll talk of dinner now & not of your Letter which robb'd me of mine, as a Christian return for which I will give you the offering of 27 feasts that being the number of dinnerings we have figured at since the 6<sup>th</sup> of Jan<sup>y</sup>, Christmas day here. As you may conclude I feel a little tired with them. Their luxuries and magnificence soon lose their effect, & the unnatural hours kept

<sup>1</sup> Count Alexander Woronzow. He died at this time. See above, p. 135, note.

here totally destroy every species of pleasure when once the gloss of novelty is at an end. I won't enter into particulars because I have gone precisely the Circle that is register'd in Matty's Letters. The effect left upon my imagination is that of having flitted amongst the Ghosts of the Court of Catherine. Moscow is the Imperial terrestrial political Elysium of Russia. All those whose power existed in the reign of Catherine & of Paul & all those who are discarded or conceiv'd to be superannuated by Alexander hold an *ideal* Consequence awarded by Courtesy alone in this lazy idle magnificent & Asiatic town, for all the effective power has long since pass'd as an inheritance to their successors who rule the Imperial realm at Petersburg & flutter away their hours about the Court.

Nevertheless the Ruffled decorated phantom of Prince Gallitzen, Grand Chamberlain in the time of Catherine, retains its Orders, its Stars & its Ribbons which added to the Weight of four score years & ten bends it double to the ground. It wears its Key of diamonds, its bay & embroidery and all its glittering baubles on its *bones*, & receives the homage of its brother Ghosts who in former days shared with it the honors of State !<sup>1</sup> Another of these gaudy phantoms is Count Ostrowman, Grand Chancellor of the Empire in the Reign of Catherine.<sup>2</sup> The orders of St George, of St Alexander Neffsky, St Wolodimer &c. &c. hang it over in red, blue & different coloured stripes. 83 years have frozen in a Pyramid upon his head, and his gibbering Skeleton rattles in his Coach & eight with out riders, dines with his high Dukes behind his Chair & in fact enacts the same etiquette from courtesy that was awarded him in his more effective days of Imperial favor. Count Alexis Orloff who was Grand Admiral in the time of Catherine is richer than any Prince in Christendom & revels in Asiatic luxury. The hand that strangled Peter III is cover'd with its recompence of brilliants beneath which the portrait of Catherine

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Count Ivan Ostermann (1725-1811), son of the great minister Count Andrew Ostermann, the German who was discovered by Peter the Great and, after a long period of power in four successive reigns, was exiled to Siberia on the accession of the Empress Elizabeth in 1740. Under Catherine II served as Vice-Chancellor, with the direction of foreign affairs after Panin's death, and was for a short time Chancellor in the reign of Paul. He retired to Moscow in 1797 "for reasons of health." A mediocre politician compared with his father.

smiles in eternal Gratitude.<sup>1</sup> This is another of our Moscow Ghosts, & another is General Korsikoff a surviving Favorite who may really be call'd a diamond Vision & who in the midst of wrinkles cherishes the remembrance of that past distinction which drew on him the envy of his Country.<sup>2</sup> Prince Bariatinsky,<sup>3</sup> Prince Nesvitsky,<sup>4</sup> Mons<sup>r</sup> Rgifsky, and other Conspirators of the year 1762 trundle about their paunches & patriotism, their swords & keys, and all the insignia of their former greatness. In short the Grandees—& in this circle, alas, we only move—are as I said before of another World, and yet the same important Gossip of Court folly, the same Vanity, the same puff'd up pride, the same Ostentation sways them & creates their happiness & unhappiness as if the Grave did not yawn beneath their tottering feet to menace them as it hourly does with an earthly oblivion of their Brocaded existence.

I confess I am heartily sick of the name of *Great Catherine* from this group of displaced place dotards. She is praised uniformly with a reference to *their own Services*, and what is really doing in Russia in the political world I don't know. As uniformly Alexander is esteem'd a driveller, a frenchified innovator, a School-boy, & a Tyrant in embryo; and since they themselves have quitted the Helm of Public affairs the Vessel has been they think, toss'd in a hurricane of Error & impending misfortune. To say the truth, I believe Alexander would not be burned for a Witch, but he shines by the comparison of Constantine who only wants the opportunity to be as detestable & wicked as Paul ever was; at

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Ivan Rimsky-Korsakoff (1754-1831), formerly Chamberlain to Catherine II. Became favourite on the fall of Zoritch (see below, p. 387), but his success was short lived and he was obliged to retire to Moscow soon afterwards on the discovery of his *liaison* with Countess Bruce, one of the Empress's friends. He had a good voice, and on Catherine's remarking to Gregory Orloff that Rimsky-Korsakoff sang like a cock, Orloff aptly replied, "True, but cocks only sing like that for St Peter."

<sup>3</sup> Prince Theodor Bariatinsky (1742-1814), Russian Field-Marshal, was a conspicuous supporter of the Empress Catherine II in the *coup d'état* by which she gained the throne. Along with Count Alexis Orloff he had the principal hand in the assassination of the unfortunate Czar Peter III at Ropscha.

<sup>4</sup> Prince Ivan Vasilievich Nesvitsky (d. 1806), ex-officer of the Horse Guards and Court Chamberlain. One of Catherine's partisans in the dethronement of Peter III.



THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER I

*From the portrait by G. Monnier formerly in the Stroganoff Collection  
in St. Petersburg*







enquire the price of each article of your dress, & speculate on the brilliancy of the next Assembly of the Nobles, there is no more to be hoped for. They don't seem to have an idea beyond this, unless to abuse the vulgarity of the Russian Jewellers & praise the perfection of the french !

One general observation I have made is that in their comparison of the English & French, the Moscovites (& I fancy I might say the Russians) prejudices are all in favour of the latter practically speaking. For example, everything is shocking for dinner that is not dress'd by a French Cook, every Boy & girl awkward who are not Educated by French People, every dress inelegant that is not Parisien &c. &c. In short, tho' this is all true & tho' French Novels are exclusively *Gobbled* by every boy & girl in Moscow, yet there is no one who does not blaspheme against Buonaparte & lament Lord Nelson ! The English Nation abstractedly is respected, but its practices are unknown, its Language rarely spoken, its fashions disliked, & the individuals criticised in a manner absolutely different from any others. Those Englishmen—travellers—who *are* admired get credit for what is unusual in their Country, such as Waltzing well, speaking German, & Russ, calling everyone ' Your Highness ' & ' Your Excellency ' at every word & complimenting without mercy everything Russian in spite of the preference they themselves give to french practices ! I am as well convinced that thro' Novels, Hairdressers, Tutoreses, Abbés, Cooks, & Milliners Russia will be revolutionized by France before twenty years roll over their heads.

Here are a couple of instances since I came of the effect of *novelty* on the proud Bears. The Princess Gagarine has run off with Signore Tonce an Italian painter,<sup>1</sup> and a Nephew of Princess Daschkaw's (M. de Jerebsoff) has married the daughter of a french Tutor ! Instruction is so little attended to here—and certainly less by Men than Women—that a few hackney'd Sophisms are

<sup>1</sup> Salvator Tonci (1756-1844), Italian painter, poet and musician. Enjoyed a great popularity in Russia as a portrait painter, and was a particular friend of Count Rostoptchin and other members of the nobility. During the French invasion and burning of Moscow in 1812 he fled to the country, where in a fit of depression he unsuccessfully endeavoured to cut his throat. Was a Director of the School of Architecture, Painting and Sculpture in Moscow. He married Princess Natalie Ivanovna Gagarine (1778-1832), by whom he had two daughters. His portrait of Rostoptchin is reproduced above (facing p. 106).

looked upon as the *black art*. This was the case with Sig<sup>r</sup> Tonce, a man of 60, who turn'd Princess Gagarine's head at 29 by professing himself an Atheist & a believer in Berkley's *Visionary System of Shadows* ! Every one thought him an inspir'd genius & threw open their Palaces to him. I saw him once & took him for a quack mountebank Doctor. 3 weeks after he went to the Archbishop of Moscow for a Licence. On being ask'd what Religion he was of he laugh'd & said ' Any or none ! ' This produced a growl amongst the Bears. However he turn'd Greek the next Morn<sup>g</sup> & was accordingly married ! Four different large fat Princes cried to me in relating the disgrace. However it was a 9 days' Wonder & now serves for a precedent to futurity !

Accomplishments are taught the Girls more than ever was known before, & *that* one can perceive the advance of by the Stile of their Mothers. The latter are to a Woman Gamesters but cannot always explain themselves in french. However the trophies of their Celebrity are generally recorded with Credit in the annals of Galantry, & this is no sort of impediment to their Consideration in the *beau monde*. I don't know how Comparison would serve on this subject. In Russia *we* only know such as the Prince of Wales & Duchesses of Gordon & Devonshire in London. As to such innocent, virtuous, humble, rational, rosy, white robed Nymphs as you, the Lathams, Penroses, & Glanmirites, there is no such rank in society here and consequently no such beings. The more I know of these matters the less I am surprised at Englishmen being in such a hurry to marry the moment they return from their travels. There is that gentlemanlike fine young man S——n who stared poverty in the face to marry my favorite Sarah C——n and he has gone the round of Nations ; there is Lord King, & 40 others I could name ; but in one Word to use Princess Daschkaw's expression upon this subject ' I do tink God Almighty himself ought to be proud when he sais, I have made de English Woman'. She is not however half so fond of English *Men*. . . .

Alas ! Our sand is nearly run at Moscow which I am grievously sorry for. It is warmer than at Troitskoe, & scarcely a day has pass'd that Matty & I have not trudged round the House in the snow for an hour to the amazement of the Russians who literally never put their feet to the ground.

I saw a most curious sight about 3 weeks ago. I was deploring to the Princess the circumstance of my losing many Nationalities from moving too high in the Circle of Society & saying to her how much I should like to see Merchants & Taverns & shop-keepers &c. &c. &c. She most good naturedly promised I should be gratified, & a day was appointed for a party of 16 or 17 of us to go dine at the most famous Tavern in Moscow. Everything was compleatly in the Russian stile, every dish peculiar to the Country—and I suppose there was at least 100 of them ! To make the matter compleat *La Maitresse d'Hotel* dress'd in gold embroidery & diamonds sat at the head of the Table with her face, neck & arms painted like a doll. This painting is not from necessity but national usage ever since Russia was in existence. Our Attendants to the number of 40 were bearded Men dress'd in yellow, purple & various colour'd Shirts push'd up at the wrists so as to leave half their arms naked without Coats or Waistcoats. There was a Boy who play'd on an Organ & who paid the Master several hundred Roubles a year which was but the overplus of his earnings which shews the concourse of people who daily frequent that place & look upon Music as a necessary of Life. After dinner, Coffee, desert &c. a group of Gypsies was brought in for our diversion. They were dress'd in gold brocaded Shawls tied on one Shoulder & earings form'd of various Coins. Oh, how beautifully they danc'd the Bohemian and Egyptian dances ! They look'd exactly like the dancing Figures found in Herculaneum & Pompeia. Their vivacity border'd on frenzy, at some moments when fear was to be express'd, & their movements accompanied by abrupt cries gave so wild & preternatural an effect that it was impossible to imagine them the inhabitants of this drowsy planet.

I am just come upstairs from some of the usual Visitors & I am grown so used to their Ways that my observations is blunted, or else how different I should think their manners in a hundred things from what I have seen elsewhere. No Man dares to sit down in the presence of his Superior without being order'd ! This minute the Princess is sitting on her Divan *talking all*, & half a dozen princes are standing cap in hand before her ! Those of small pretentions seldom advance beyond the Door where they stand pinion'd to their three cock'd Hats and relieving their fatigue sometimes on one foot sometimes on the other. Subordination

holds a sovereign sway at Moscow, & the term *Gentleman* here possesses no such equalizing power as to banish the degrees of Imperial favor from the mind of any single individual I have met with. Old Wizards of Men therefore and old Crones of Women are Omnipotent here as they naturally have more Ribbons & Honors to boast than the Youngers. As to young Men of agreeability & fashion there are very few, as all of that description are either pushing their fortunes about the Court at Petersburg or in the Armies. A fry of unfledged boys are their substitutes who appear slinking at doors, still in powder & pomatum & new cloaths, with their french Tutors watching the effect of their first hopeful bow & scrape into the awful Circle of their Superiors ! The Lord pity the folly of this round World—& me in the middle of it like a Toad within a Stone !

I am come to the end of my paper without thanking you for all your news, but I wont make mine a paraphrase upon yours or I shall get it back again by the force of your following my example. Look at the seal of this Letter. Yesterday the Princess gave it to me. The Seven Stars or Great Bear of the North is herself, & the flame on the Altar the sentiment she has lit up in me which is engraved upon the edge ; it is a beautiful Seal cut on a precious Stone.

Matty is screeching to me to give a hundred messages. I have only room to abridge them to their number.

Good night.

KATHERINA ROMANOVNA.

To ANNA CHETWOOD

TROITSKOE. 21<sup>st</sup> March N.S. 1806

“ This sheet of paper lay expanded before me yesterday & I thought I was going to answer your Letter, my dearest Anna, which I receiv’d at Moscow & which struck joy from my heart like the touch of Moses at which the rock in the Wilderness overflow’d, but when I attempted to write such mournful groans issued from my pen that a Winter’s Night thro’ a Keyhole howling a requiem to a shipwreck could not have sounded more shrill, more injured, more bitter, or more desponding than those accents which would fain have pierced your compassion had I not jump’d up from my desk & call’d Eleanor to unpack my Trunk, and move the furniture

into new places, & make the usual distributions of arrangement after our return from Moscow. Heavens, eloquent must that expression be which could attempt to convey the suffering of a Russian Journey ! From the constant passage of Merchandise on the Roads they are plough'd up into Rocks of frozen & refrozen snow over which you must drive instantly flumping down into a proportionable cavity. In these dreadful holes one is sometimes rooted for 20 minutes at a time, the miserable Horses falling with the exertion of pulling one out & lashed up again & again by dozens of People & servants who aid in supporting either side of the Carriage. Besides the Coach in which Anna Petrovna & I had the misfortune of being cramm'd with Pillows & writing-cases & one of the Dogs there were 8 other conveyances ; so that Tuesday Morning when they were all drawn up in a half Moon before the door at Moscow we wanted only a few Elephants to give us the appearance of an Indian Army ! But added to our corporal sufferings, our buffets & bruises, our sickness & intolerable fatigue, we were in no humour for quitting Moscow at least for six weeks to come. I speak of A.P., Matty & myself, for as to the Princess she was only suppressing the radiance of her joy never desiring to quit Troitskoe as long as she lives & making her yearly visit to Moscow a sacrifice to others. . . .

We found Matty stretch'd in state upon the Sopha, she having arriv'd with the Princess before us, in all the solemnities of indisposition. She had got a violent sore throat & the House was ransacking for remedies ! She has been in bed ever since tho' now perfectly well, & scarcely a moment has that excellent Princess stir'd an inch from her side except when she help'd to smooth the bed with her own hands, to mix her drink, & to apply Cataplasms to her feet ! It was with the most earnest entreaties alone that we could prevent her sitting up all Night (after such a journey too), & literally agonized attention & anxiety has made the service of a *Femme de Chambre* almost superfluous. One of her expressions was, '*Ecoutez, ma chère Kaity, dis day my Jews in Poland m'ont envoyé deir rents, two towsand Guinea ; & I wou'd fling it in de bottom of de River if dat wou'd make well my little Angel !*' Another time Matty told her not to forget that her illness was infectious, 'Well, & what is dat to me ? Only *un motive encore plus fort*, for I might take it off upon my own self.

I have asked God Almighty dat prayer already.' Her adoration of her surpasses anything I ever saw; her sentiments might dignify blank verse on this subject tho' I let them go *in her own words* which are an eternal source of amusement to me..

What adds to her *naïveté* is the earnestness of countenance & manner which accompanies all she says & does. Speaking to me just now of this Place which she adores, after scrubbing the Windows with the Skirt of her Great Coat to get a glimpse of the view, she exclaim'd: 'Now I pray you, dear Sister Kaity, admire with me my beautiful Troitskoe. Look have you seen or in Italy or in France (*mais c'est un très vilain pays*) *même en Angleterre* a ting so perfect or so magnificent as *cette superbe Prairie à l'autre Coté de la Rivière*? Tell me out true, is it not *un vrai Paradis*? 'Indeed Princess I see nothing but snow. It was very green & pretty last October, but I can discern nothing, absolutely nothing of what you speak.' '*Cependant, ma chère amie, avec votre esprit* you might give de Seasons changing upon de Earth! *Passons le dessus*, de Trees demselves will make dier Leaves significant soon & you will confess que *jamais jamais* nor for graces nor for perfections dier exists not so charming a Place in de World as Troitskoe! *Et pourquoi, mon enfant*? I did make *it myself*, I work'd with de Masons at de Walls, I put in de little trees in dier holes; 'twas mine own hands done dat. I draw de plans, and towsend of my Peasants help'd with their Hatchet. I was not rich den as I am now, & so I did make de oeconomist *en tout plein des choses*.'

23<sup>rd</sup> March

"I don't know what I was going to tell you the day before yesterday when the Princess came wandering into my room from Matty's with a large Orange rind in her hand & a most beautiful pearl necklace compos'd of 4 strings of very fine Oriental ones cramm'd into it which she bid me tell her the Apothecary had sent her for her throat. The Conceit of this rejoic'd her to such a pitch that she never ceased glorying & striding about the room & abusing every Physician upon the face of the Earth & laughing or rather crowing at her having satiriz'd them by this means of sending Pearls instead of Pills! I want to know whether these trifles give you an idea of her? She is the greatest oddity upon Earth tho' the Causes of my saying so are not comprised in the Circumstances I relate.

But to talk of something else. I had best at once whisk you back to Moscow & take you up to the top of the highest Tower there to catch a glimpse of the Town which was precisely what Matty & I did about a fortnight ago accompanied by 2 or 3 other Traineaus in one of which was M<sup>r</sup> Rowand who took us up to the top of Ivan Veleka from whence the view is most beautiful, most striking & extensive ! This Tower is a distinguished feature in the Kremlin which rises amidst its fortifications in the centre of Moscow. All the Arms of the Empire decorate its encircling Walls & the Imperial Eagle extends its golden wings amidst the glittering Chains and Crosses which top its thousand Churches. The River which hangs like a Silver Crescent upon the town irradiates a scene of the most vivid animation ! The fiery Horses of Livonia, Arabia & Tartary bound by hundreds round and round the Course, mark'd out with green boughs upon the ice, conducted by Cavaliers in little shells of Traineaus that circle & circle in dazzling rotation, & the Ice Mountains raised to a considerable height compel a swiftness in the motion of those who venture which *flying* alone can explain. The remoter part of the River is cut open in trenches & lines of washerwoman bend over to wring their Cloaths unconscious of the Cold. Baskets as large as Huts appear above the Surface which contain the Winter's Fish plunged to a considerable depth beneath & each proprietor weekly visits his watry Prison provident of the impending Fast. Oh, the beauty of the Russian Sky ! Whether one contemplates it by Night or by Day, its loveliness is equally resplendent. So vaulted & so blue, so cloudless & so etherial ! You may suppose how fine the outline is which frees the objects from the cerulean dome of Light !

Innumerable circumstances concur to give to Moscow an Asiatic air beyond any Town I ever saw ! The Crescent glitters beneath the Cross on every Tower as a triumph to Christianity & mingles among the yellow Globes of Gold which blaze amidst the Sunshine. The gaudy Belfrys open to the day, the metal Copings, stupendous Palaces guarded by roaring Monsters & environ'd by Palisades, Theatres, Arches, Panoramas, Hospitals & Convents interspersed by great extent of private & public Gardens recede in an Amphitheatre from the Fortress & fill the Circle of 26 miles ! But above all the Churches painted on the outside in gigantic



MOSCOW : A VIEW FROM THE KREMLIN

*From a print in the British Museum*





Saints halo'd in radiant gold ! One sees before them myriades of people blessing themselves & prostrating before these daubs of sanctification with an ardour more like idolatry than religion. They then rise & holla'ing to their Horses drive on their Cars heap'd with blocks of ice to the Cellars of the Nobles for the approaching Summer. The Houses are fringed with icicles, the water arrested by the cold & hanging in Streaming Crystal from the Spouts, the feather'd Snow upon the branches of the Trees, the magnificently frosted Beards congeal'd upon the Colour'd Sashes of the Peasants. These & a hundred other such Characteristic Sights fill the Streets & relieve the extended Sheet of Snow which veils an undulating Country & glitters like tissued gems upon the surrounding Hills ancient in Cloister'd Monasterys which distance shadows into the vapoury incertitude of endless perspective & loses in the rising mists of Circling Clouds.

As I conjured you up to the top of Ivan Veleka, so let me spirit you down again amongst us at Troitskoe to repose a little with us in this Feudal State, for if you will have my opinion of the matter Russia is but in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. Yes ! I know all about the luxury of Moscow & the civilization of Petersburg, but have you ever seen a clumsy romping ignorant Girl of 12 years old with a fine Parisian Cap upon her head ? So seems to my eye this Imperial Realm. The cloister'd ignorance not only of the 12<sup>th</sup> but of the 11<sup>th</sup> Century is the groundwork of this colossal Region and 5 or 6 Centurys will no doubt produce the same effects here they have no other parts of Europe ; but Time must disengage the ligaments which bind the plant before it strengthens & expands into a self supported standard. More sudden means would bend it to the Earth & so of Russian political liberty & civilization ! But what business have I to shake my ears over the World, as if I held it in my clutches like an Apple elaborately to prove that the rosy side was sweet & the green side sour ? I will take you down stairs into the Hall where dozens of Slaves are waiting with their offerings of Bread and Salt to greet the Princess ! When she appears they fall down before her & kiss the ground with that senseless obeisance that stupefaction feels at the approach of superior Power ! Her Lenity makes their Lot better perhaps than that of others, but that's saying very little for the System. Each Noble is omnipotent. He may be either an Angel or a Devil !

The chance is on the latter side, & it must be almost an Angel indeed who is not ruin'd by the possession of uncontroll'd Authority. I look upon every Noble as an iron link in the massy chain that manacles this Realm, & as to the Individuals amongst them that I have met at Moscow 'tis impossible to be in their Company without recollecting that they are Subjects under a Despotism, for in their judgements *bad & good* literally appears to be synonymous with *favour & disgrace*. The idea attach'd to what arises from *Character* always gives place to *Office* & the exterior of deference can be calculated by the Court Almanack much better than by the Chronicle of Friendship.

If I want to know the virtues of a Russian Courtier I anticipate the answers I should inevitably receive by gazing on his Coat & viewing those 4 Cardinal & most immaculate virtues of the Red Ribbon of St Alexander, the blue one of St André, the Order of St George, & that of St Wolodimer ! The warmth of favour which emanates from the Sunshine of the Throne molifies these Courtiers to receive the imperial Stamp whether the impression it makes is that of a Serpent or an Ass ! The effect of all this upon manners is most apparent ; & inasmuch as People are always most tenacious of precarious possessions, so are the noble Moscovites whose abode at such a distance from Petersburg tacitly proves a something which dims them as a sparkling gem in the Imperial Diadem ! ' Then why were you so sorry for leaving Moscow ? ', I think I hear you exclaim ! Why then I protest, for very negative reasons ! Because when I compare Moscow with Paris or Naples in the way of amusements, rationality, or attractions the Contrast becomes laughable. Comparisons are odious, & it wd never occur to me to make them if the Russians did not ape the French in every article of Life—in Manners, in Living, in Dress, in Language, & in Rouge. Their Living, dress & language succeed very well ; but as to Manners (& now I speak of the young Women particularly) they are the most abrupt, superficial & ignorant I ever happen'd to meet with in my Life. I have ask'd several young Englishmen, who we have known in Moscow this Winter, how they were struck with the general exterior, & their observations have been generally the echo of my own, only in addition that the young men of their acquaintance were not one jot beyond the emptiness of the Girls. I have seen at the balls a Young Man

go up & ask a beautiful young Princess to dance (for there really *are* some pretty Young Women). He makes a signal of a bow to her & walks towards the set letting her follow at her leisure. They dance—& most infamously too. As soon as it is over he makes another bow & she a curtesy without uttering a word during this time, & off they stalk in different directions.

Paugh! Let us talk rather of what is agreeable: & do you know, in spite of what I say there exists a thousand *agrémens*, even in the way of amusements which recompence one for the hollowness of these societys. For example, the dryness of the Climate, the elasticity of the Air, the extraordinary diversion of the Ice Mountains, the Traineau Courses, the Stoves, the Baths, the warmth of Cloathing, & the habit of breakfasting in one's own room. All ~~these~~ things I delight in, tho' I do not often practice the exposure to the Air as absolutely one is looked upon as Mad for not subscribing to the National Confinement. I do not often enjoy the ice mountain diversion, but as to walking I regularly practice it every day before breakfast at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 o'clock & after dinner at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 2 or three; & as a proof of the Climate I can say with truth that since I had the jaundice I have never known what it was to have the slightest cold. . . .

I wish you would ask me questions that I might forage out answers to fill my Epistles to you, for I see you are fumed at the nothingness of those traces which my recitals leave upon your mind. Why cannot I talk of Unicorns, Centaurs, & Hydras dire, these being the favour'd tenantry of your imagination. Oh, by the by I might talk not of Horn'd Monsters but of Horns! These famous & most renowned Horns which exalteth the glory of this Nation above all the Nations of the Earth. The Music I mean. I shall owe it a grudge as long as I live. Three different Balls did I gasp at for five hours in the hopes of hearing it, & till the last I was disappointed. Tho' the Horn Music is composed of 40 Youths (who had better be fighting for their Country than standing like Minums & Quavers & Crotchets all their lives in an Orchester!) each Youth having a Horn to his Lips, yet the Surprise surpasseth the pleasure, & in my mind Surprise is the sensation lawfully belonging to Harlequin's Clown & one of the most blackguard emotions of the divine spirit which animates the human mind.

So, no more my dearest A. from

K. W.

To THE REV. JOHN CHETWOOD<sup>1</sup>

October 14<sup>th</sup> 1806 TROITSKOE

"... Let us now wander in expiation of our sins towards the border of the Tomb where before the hallowed Bones of the canonized Demetrius (once a sinner like yourself) we bent our way from Moscow the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in August blazing in an atmosphere of 33 degrees of heat ! At Moscow however I must pause a moment where in reality we remained 8 days to familiarize ourselves to its Novelties during the Summer Season, for of all Towns I believe it least resembles itself in Winter when the sparkling Frost shone on from the eternal bright Stars of the Northern Constellation makes one fancy the World cut in Diamonds. Literally it appear'd so to us as we used to drive in the Snow by the Whitest Moonlight from our Winter Orgies. Not so in the Yellow Rays of perpetual Sunshine which from a thousand gilded domes & balls & spires reflected an eternal dazzle thro' the livelong day.

Torment is no word to express what my brain endured from the unceasing ringing of bells ; and as to Flies & buzzing Midges with all the gallant retinue of poisonous Mosquitoes no Southern Country that I have ever been in surpasses this in persecution of this nature ! But to do justice in other respects, its Boulevards & public walks of a Summer's Evening are enchanting, & you may form some idea how much it deserves the title of *Russ in Urbe* when I tell you amongst various other Spacious Gardens attach'd to the residences of private individuals no less than 14 English Acres are laid out in the Vaux Hall stile to the House of the Grand Chancellor Count Ostrowman in the very centre of the Town. The Flower Markets too may for the luxuriance of every blossoming plant very well vie with Covent Garden ; and as to fruits, there is a display beyond every thing I have seen elsewhere of the Kind which is not surprising when one recollects that Hot Houses are a necessary of life here & those too on so prodigal a scale that I have often walk'd thro' ranges of Pine Apples in a line of a hundred at each side seperated in Pots to introduce at the Desert, totally independent of what is to be found in the bed of the

<sup>1</sup> Rev. John Chetwood (1742-1814) of Glanmire, Rector of Rathcooney, County Cork. He was a grandson of Swift's friend, Knightley Chetwood of Woodbrook, Queen's County. His daughter Elizabeth was married to the Wilmots' brother Robert.

Orangerie. But the Water Melons are still more famous from their prodigious size & refreshing powers during the intolerable heat to which this climate is subject & luckily they make their appearance just in the nick of time. I have seen many of them large enough to House you within their Green Rinds with as much ease as Filbert generously harbours its intruder ! And before I quit the subject of fruit I must do honor to the beauty of the Siberian Apples which are perfectly transparent & of a large size & higher flavour than any other sort I ever saw. So far for a *snack* before you set out on your pilgrimage, for I know of old you are not a little testy whenever you suspect a slight is offer'd to the flesh whatever losses may accrue elsewhere, & tho' already I have used you very handsomely yet were you amongst us Bears you would not be permitted to stir an inch without partaking of '*un Dejeuner D'antre*' where smoking Pies, Fish, Vinaigrette, Caviare & other trifles of the same nature are supposed to make no further impression on your Memory than what may lawfully be forgotten at the expiration of an hour's Drive.

Well then, as I said before we left Moscow on the 11th of August in the Eve<sup>g</sup> accompanied by two Squires, relatives of the Princess, & after travelling 43 Versts northwards thro' the most magnificent Country sometimes broken by Imperial Residences sometimes by Merchants' lovely Country Seats, sometimes by the Nobles' Stately Castles—to the right hand Count Razomoffsky's famous Palace, the river bounding its encircling Forests ; then M. de Mouramzoff's & Prince Gallitzen's grounds dress'd to the Water's edges & reflected in blue Lakes all gay with boats & Swans & floating Bridges—at length we arrived at M<sup>me</sup> de Nebalsin's where we were engaged to pass a little time on our way to the Convent of Troitza (the Loretto of this Country) & where we found a gay assemblage of the Princes of the Land with music, bankets & entertainments to greet our appearance. This Lady is a brisk —& very brisk—Widow living like a Queen upon her own domain which is delightfully scatter'd in the English taste amidst shrubberys, gardens, woods, & highly tasteful plantations ! Baths ! Dairies ! Hot Houses ! English Oeconomy ! Studs of Horses ! Dwarfs ! & new improvements occupied us the following Morning ; & after dinner we all drove out in open Carriages to the neighbouring Village Kaupakna to see the manufacture of prince

Yousoupoff where Shawls & Silks are very highly perfectionized, & those specimens of furniture which we saw in the Looms seem quite upon a par with what I recollect at Lyons. The Prince holds it from the Crown, is under certain restrictions, employs 700 persons, & is accountable for all damages; he has also a Fabrick of Paper & Watches &c. &c. &c.

The following Day happen'd to be the day for blessing the waters, & as we drove from the door in the continuation of our Journey nothing could have a more Theatric effect than the processions of Priests exalting their Golden Crosses, waving their holy banners, holding up their various Saints, & follow'd by all the Inhabitants of the Village in their gala trappings walking round the Water's edge which they consecrated by various forms & ceremonies in one full Chorus of religious music! To arrive at Troitza Monastery 58 Versts remain'd to be accomplished. Luckily the entire way almost was shaded by Forests with a continuation of such beautiful residences as I have already describ'd towering amidst their foliage, & what is attendant upon every Russian Residence a Church & seperate Belfry dazzling their gilden Domes & Chains & Crosses & Balls high above the reach of Green which richly cloaths the expanse of Country & is only broken by the luxuriance of Harvests waving in yellow plains of Corn, Barley, & every species of wild flower which gives an inexpressible gaiety to the Scene.

We travelled day and Night & did not arrive till six o'clock the following Morning at Troitza where, tho' we had one of the little wooden Houses of the Town, we did not attempt to sleep but very patiently had the Carriages converted into beds and slumber'd under the protection of a prodigious Shed, where all the Carts & Horses of every sort of traveller came in without Ceremony & neigh'd & kick'd & stamp'd & flounder'd to their hearts' content! Alas! this is getting a little behind the scenes; & to a British Carcase one must confess the Russian grievances of an Imperial Journey, particularly in the Dog Days, pushes one's great patience beyond the inheritance allotted by the gifts of Job himself, as you would be the first to acknowledge when it came to your endurance! A Carriage full of Cooks & Kitchen Utensils always preceded us, so that in that score we were in excellent train—we had even a Butler & silver side board—but it ought to occupy

you more the contemplation of the ancient Monastery, as we open'd our eyes on our quadruped Friends & bed fellows which rose in gothic grandeur amidst its battlements and which once fortified the retreat of Peter the Great when by the wiser counsel of his sister Sophia he refuged himself from the rebellion of the Strelitz.

Tho' Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup> clipp'd the wings of the angelic Brethren who renouncing the Vanities of the World inhabit this place & deprived them of 70 thousand Peasants, yet (tho' their equivalent from the Crown is trifling) they realize every year twenty thousand Roubles as sure Revenues from Pilgrims who swarm from the 41 Governments of this Imperial Realm to kiss the crumbling bones of Saint Sergius who lies in his *Miraculous Shrine* canopied in golden brocading fringed with Oriental pearl! The Coffin was open'd by two Priests who on the approach of Princess Daschkaw said Masses round the Tomb & presented the Cross which she was desired to kiss, as also a famish'd shrunk black finger of the Saint! As for the body nothing was to be seen but a Swathe of crimson embroidery & a wooden head bearing on it a radiant Crown of precious Stones & trophies hung within its Shrine of Mundane Luxury, of Orders, of Portraits set in brilliants, Diamond Crosses, Imperial Cyphers and worldly baubles crowded as in a Sorcerer's Cell precisely in the very Sanctuary made for the *renunciation* of such luxury 'on pain of being carried to Hell on the wings of the Imperial Eagle' on which they solemnly swear! This is literally the form of their oath on being made a Bishop, to signify which many is the Saint (I suppose I have seen myriads) represented on the walls of the Churches on the feathery pinions of the Eagle wide stretched—for the expedition one may naturally conclude! The present Archbishop Plato, who is esteem'd one of the most Singular men in Russia, is the superior of this Establishment. He is a mixture of everything opposite to the Religion & Constitution of his Country, & yet keeps up to all the outward forms so as to awe the populace like a demi-God. He is thought of so much consequence from his influence & cleverness that he is held in dread at Court & universally esteem'd an Iron Wheel in this political Machine of State.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Levashin Platon (1737-1812), Archbishop of Moscow and Archimandrite of the Troitza Monastery. Was one of the most prominent hierarchs of the Russian Church and the author of several theological works.



After having been well Smoked by the incense at this Shrine where daily Miracles are perform'd, a parcel of black cowl'd Monks conducted us to see the Treasures of the Monastery. These are all set out as in a Museum in several rooms, the walls of which are lined with Glass Cases, where all the Robes to the number of at least 500, the Covering of the Communion Table on which the Eucharist cannot stand unless some particles of the reliques of a Martyr be woven in the Web, the Sacred Vessels, & all the penitential offerings of Magdalens, Tzars, Bishops & other Sinners are exhibited in the most wonderful display of Oriental riches & Luxury ! Chalices & Communion Services sent by Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup> are exquisitely beautiful cut out of Onyzes, all enriched with diamonds in the most dazzling splendour ; one is a single blood stone with base & handle of Opal, & others of pure gold & pearl ! On the Robes of the Priests I observ'd a little Ticket which I ask'd the meaning of, & they told me 'twas a Memorandum of the number of pounds weight of pearl on the embroidery of each Robe ! Sometimes 'twas 8 pounds, Sometimes 10, & Sometimes 12. The Communion Cloths are work'd and fringed with real pearl—and there are several dozen of them—besides the entire Calendar of Saints & a hundred Virgin Marys, their frames irradiated in Emeralds, Amethysts, Rubys, Topazes & Sapphires ! In short the treasures of Centurys are collected in surprising profusion, tho' for the Historic documents I cannot say much. A few Sclavonian manuscripts of the Evangelists (500 years old & illuminated in colours) are the only ones existing in their Library.

To relieve our eyes from these dazzling maskings of Idolatry we mounted up the highest Belfry to gaze upon the wide extended beauty of the neighbouring Country, & amongst a thousand picturesque objects the ' Hermitage ' of Archbishop Plato struck us as most conspicuously charming. This we afterwards Visited. However to continue our holy spirit of Pilgrimage, the following Morning we bid adieu to this Russian Loretto & after travelling 30 Versets by Cock Crow we encamp'd during the heat of the day in the wooden Village of Kiribiriva in the Government of Woldemir where we reposed our high Mightinesses for 4 hours in a Barn, while on the borders of the Skirting Wood a fire was kindled under the blue vault of Heaven & our dinners very handsomely dress'd & serv'd in Plate ! During the time we had slumber'd on

the Hay our Damsels (*Diushkas*) arm'd with green branches against the Flies were waving them over our weary heads, while for my part I fell into a profound sleep & had a vision of the touching monody of your Composition which the Muses are to sing over my ashes !

As soon as the heat relented a little from its 33 degrees of persecution we drove on 30 versts further & slept that Night in the famous Town of Perislaſſ situated on the still more celebrated Lake of the same name. 'Twas on this beautiful sheet of Water reflecting the Starry Firmament of these clear blue Northern Skies on our entry into the Town which borders like a glittering Crescent on its edge that Peter the Great first exerted his Naval Propensities which afterwards served to push his Country into such premature Civilization as it is to the present day after its centuries of European darkness. 'This Lake which we found infinitely more interesting than for its Heroic lore, miserable pilgrims that we were, afforded us the most excellent fresh Herrings for our supper ; and peradventure these same Herrings might have been the cause of that *sneaking affection* the old Tyrant had always for this Lake which made him vanquish his natural antipathy to the Water & erect a Palace on its edge where in a fit of *Pot Courage* no doubt he stroked his paunch & felt himself a Hero ! 'What great events from trifling causes spring' (says you !), and certainly some of Peter's biographers give us little room to doubt of the vulgarity of his impulses.

The next day we travell'd 60 versts farther & arrived at Night at the holy Town of Rostoff where according to custom all the principal Men of the Town dress'd in their robes of office met the princess at the Gates & galloped in trim by the side of the Carriage till they conducted her to the door of the Cathedral where we all bustled thro' a full Congregation to the Silver Tomb of Saint Demetrius, and after a few prostrations orders were given to the Priests to have Masses said the following Morning at 10 o'clock when the Princess would return to salute the reliques &c. &c. &c. &c.

If you are half so tired of these Canoniz'd old Gentlemen as I am—and you will mutter ' 'tis not your fault if I am not ! '—you will take the sensible resolution of getting astride your white faced Horse & pacing round by M<sup>r</sup> Laughton's grounds, or else you may

tack another poetic Stave to my Epitaph ; for the following Morning will use you no better than Troitza Monastery did by flinging Censers of smoking incense in your Nose, by Kissing old dry Knuckles of the dead, by hearing incomprehensible Masses, & by contemplating the glittering toys of Life upon the Tombs of those who became canoniz'd by their renunciation ! I'll lay my Life you would rather see the massy doors of the Cathedral shut & make one of a very diversified group which the Archimandrite penetrated through to reach the Princess & offer her the hospitalities of his Palace ! This very respectable old Gentleman with his priestly locks waving over his shoulders, his grizzly beard, & dress'd in the floating Robes of his Religious Calling, conducted us to what we imagined to be his Cell, when what was our amazement in beholding vaulted Roofs, Italian Fresco, Suites of the most Sunny & elegantly furnish'd Apartments, Imperial portraits *reigning* on the Walls, and before a Crimson Canopy on which the Princess took her seat a Banquet laid of every variety of Food which we were most gallantly invited to partake of by our venerable Host, who order'd his attendant Monks to bring in tea & coffee, cakes & chocolate, which they did on large Trays in their own hands, while Surplices winnow'd the air & form'd the most incongruous & Centaurlike Composition of flesh & spirit I have ever witness'd !

Before our evangelical visit was at an end the ci-devant Countess Rasumoffsky, now a wandering Nun, with a troop of Ladies in her suite came to pay her duty to the reverend Archimandrite ! This Dame had signaliz'd herself at the brilliant Court of Catherine & became of late sensible that she had follow'd too scrupulously the practices of her Imperial Mistress to hope for any Consolation in the Wisdom of her political Theories. Now repentant & indignant against Life at the age of 60 she piously declared her intention of 'offering to God the leavings of the Devil' by renouncing the vanities of the World & taking the Veil. But her Cruel Husband interfered & obliged her to abandon her intentions & continue in the World which she has been obliged to consent to as by the Laws of the Land tho' a married Woman has compleat power over her Fortune she has not over her person ; & consequently she spends all her wealth in washing away the sins of her youth, in placing diamond Ciphers over the Shrines of Saints, & having

Masses said for the Souls of just Men made perfect ! When the tall & stately Dame dress'd like an imaginary Nun in dismal black with a Coral Rosary twisted round her arm appear'd the princess recognized in her one of those Victims to pecuniary interest (who swarm in this despotic Land) whom She remember'd very well at Court & who had been made to marry absolutely against her will the brother of Vassilchikoff, the then Favorite of Catherine.<sup>1</sup> . . .

Now that I have regaled you at the Sanctuary of my Archimandrite & have left you to flirt with my Wandering Nun, once a bright Calypso in this Land of Fêtes & Galas, of wealth, of shew, of sounding bells & tingling cymbals, if you have a mind to return with me back to Moscow you will again revisit as we did, all those haunts already tried with greater Circumspection and after an absence of 9 days which our pilgrimage consumed drive into our Chateau in dust, drowsiness, confusion of brain, hunger, thirst & all the appurtenances so scrupulously hid by other Travellers but so candidly acknowledged by one who feels concealment of any kind a perfidy to your ever watchful Friendship !

In a few Weeks we shall again mount the Stage of Moscow where Men are more ceremoniously usher'd into the Baptismal Font than in the shady groves of this our present dwelling, & where perhaps I may have it more in my power to satisfy your curiosity upon that subject than at present, tho' Truth compels me to avow that I did very lately see a wretched scald Infant unswathed & plunged Head & Ears by the priests into a Baptismal Font from whence it rose shrieking like a Deamon ! But before it was return'd to the Nurses an atom of Hair was cut from its head & spit upon as an offering to the Devil, while the Priests scornfully flung it back into the Font !

So now I must bid you adieu.

K. W.

<sup>1</sup> Anne Vassiltchikoff (b. 1744) *née* Razumowsky, daughter of the Hetman Field-Marshal Count Cyril Razumowsky. She married M. Basil Vassiltchikoff, Court Chamberlain. She ultimately succeeded in taking the veil and styled herself Sister Agnes. Her daughter Marie married Alexander I's minister Kotchubey.

## To HER SISTER HARRIET

TROITSKOE 21<sup>st</sup> October 1806

"... Matty has told all the Stories of our Summer Campaigns the which I have droned over again to Lucy & M<sup>r</sup> Chetwood not long ago. Oh ! If it pleas'd God that one could see Spirits & tell Stories of them in these foreign parts ! But once dead always dead in this Land, because Imagination does not beautify these Northern Spheres with one reviving ray to illumine our every-day habits of existence ; & this is true in respect to Persons it is equally so in respect to Books Nationally speaking, for I believe since the ages of Tom Thumb there never were such doleful attempts at Composition as amongst the Russians ! These twelve Months I have been dying for the Books of the Country & at length they gave me one so celebrated that it had been translated into *all Languages*, but I protest the most deplorably affected Novel that ever dissolved the heart of a Mantua Maker was Shakespear in comparison of what I found it ! So what can one do ? As to the Conversations amongst the young Bears 'tis nothing but about their Pairs & Tails, and as to the married Gentry 'tis uniformly about their family affairs & expences. You must know that every Woman has the right over her own Fortune totally independent of her Husband & he is as independent of his Wife. Marriage therefore is no union of interests whatsoever, & the Wife if she has a large Estate and happens to marry a poor Man is still consider'd rich while the Husband may go to Jail without one farthing of her possessions being responsible for him ! This gives a curious sort of hue to the Conversations of the Russian Matrons which to a meek English Woman appears prodigious independence in the midst of a Despotic Government !

At first I thought the men bewitch'd when in the Circle before Dinner a Snuff box or Toothpick case has been exhibited as the gift of their Wives on such a *Jour de Fête* or *Jour de Nom*, and the Wives in like manner gravely boasting of having receiv'd a present from their Husbands of a Turkish Shawl or embroider'd Reticule or Earing or bracelet ! But I was still more surprised when a Lady was ask'd for who had not yet return'd to Moscow & her Husband replied that she was making some enquiries on her Estate in the Ukraine & that she had some idea of selling it from

the extreme inconvenience of the distance which separated it from his ; so that when a party of Ladies talk together in a group one is sure of affairs, affairs, affairs, being the subject, except when a Coquettish one attracts the general attention by the exhibition of a Diamond Wreath or Necklace which she immediately tells you cost so many hundred Slaves, for in making considerable purchases the Land goes without mercy & the Slaves remain like the Trees which pass from one possessor to another. And this brings me to one general observation which is that the Landed property of this Imperial Realm is from unconscientious extravagance of the Nobles passing like Wild-fire to the Merchants who are in Russia neither more nor less than Pedlars & Shopkeepers ; and, exactly as they did in France before the Revolution, the Princes of the Country are breaking down all ideal Barriers & marrying the daughters of the Merchants as fast as they can ! This however may not lead exactly to the same Catastrophe, for *here* there is no pride of birth to be wounded, and 'tis comical enough to reflect that Peter the Great who was the most iron Despot that ever scourged the Earth has form'd under the name of an Aristocratic Depotism the most absolute disregard to birth & in this respect the most compleat Republic I believe that the World contains.

The Clue to this Labyrinth of paradox is the Military Power being the sole Standard of Honor, so that if the son of a Shoe Maker & a free Man was made a Captain he would take precedence of the first Nobleman in Russia who happen'd to be only a Lieutenant. Therefore the high Spirit of Aristocracy with all the beauty of Ancestry, which has cut the throat of so many Nations & made such lovely Romances & Poems, no more exists within a single Russian mind that I have ever met with than Sun beams within Cucumbers or any other monstrous incongruity—for example Public Spirit in this Country or the Liberty of Parliamentary discussion in England, & I believe I cannot well unite two more compleat opposites. You may however guess at what Society is from my telling you what it is not, & consequently you will not be surprised when I tell you Self interest points their hopes & fears which dwindle into mere Family affairs which they talk over without the slightest reserve, whether to expose or exalt their Relations or property, their misfortunes, Riches, poverty, their actions, their banishments or their rewards.

This letter has been lying several days in my desk & I never recollected it. I know not what I intended saying to you, but since I have compleatly snapt the thread of my discourse I will pop upon the very first idea that comes into my head & that is a Georgian Prince whom I saw at Moscow last August after our return from our Pilgrimage at a grand entertainment given at the Emperor's expence in the Kremlin. The object of the entertainment was to have the first stone laid of an Academy by the Governor General Beckleshoff on his going out of Office which Compliment was honourably allotted to him by the new Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> Tutleman. M. de Volowieff the conductor of all the public works at Moscow had Tents erected for the occasion under which all the Lords of the Land assembled and the Archbishop with a swarm of Priests consecrated the stone with religious Ceremonies which was *laid* with due formality to the sound of Music & the report of Cannon from the Fortress. In the midst of this uproar a group of Georgian Figures struck my eye dress'd in robes tied about their Waists with the most beautiful Turkish Scarfs, yellow Boots, Shawl pocket handkerchiefs & their hands cover'd with diamond rings. They were brought up to be presented to the Princess which ceremony they perform'd very awkwardly from not comprehending the forms of salutation. These tributary Princes to Russia were only just arrived as sort of Prisoners to the Emperor ; their Country has long been under the Imperial Yoke, but not liking the Controul they suffer'd the principal one, a haughty turbulent daring looking mustach'd savage, united himself with the Persians & was caught in arms fighting against the Russian power. His son, a fine young man of 17, was with him & had the most melancholy expression of Countenance while on the contrary his Father seem'd diverted at the novelty of European scenes & never ceased making enquiries from his Interpreter of everything that pass'd at the same time shewing by his demeanour the most haughty consciousness of superiority. I was amused at contemplating the fallen King with all his Asiatic Retinue as they sat opposite to me at a brilliant Banquet which terminated the Entertainment, as I caught a glimpse of their Mustachos & bare throats, scarfs, & diamond rings through the spreading branches of Fruit Trees which shaded all the Table with the most refreshing Green.

There is one little Story for you, & now I'll tell you another. It is about an entertainment given by M<sup>r</sup> Durassoff at his exquisite Country Seat 17 Versts from Moscow in compliment to Princess Daschkaw two days after the one I have mention'd. This little Man inherits untold riches from his Father who was a possessor of Siberian Mines & had himself ennobled afterwards. His Mother was a Roscolnic by Faith—this Sect with respect to the Greek Church is as the Methodist is to the Lutheran—& when she died & was buried by her Husband the Roscolnics in a body stole her Corpse by torchlight & gave it the horrors of their interment in due form. No doubt these interesting circumstances must awaken your expectations respecting the Son & Heir of such earthly & spiritual grace ; & so they would were you to see the Paradise of a Place he dwells in ! As we drove towards the House it look'd like a Marble Temple from the first story being supported by white Columns excepting the Center part which rises in a high Dome & serves as a Banqueting Room the vaulted Ceiling of which is most beautifully painted with Loves & Graces, Apollo & the Muses, Aurora & the Hours &c. &c. &c ! All the Company were assembled under the open Colonnades which stood in flights of Marble Steps cover'd with Arabian and Persian Jasmines ! Pinks ! Hydrangia ! Roses ! & Geraniums ! all in full bloom & fragrance descending to the Green Lawn beautifully slanting to the Water's edge & shadow'd with Trees. From every part of this delightful place one discovers a fresh assemblage of Woods & Lawns, Groves & Lakes, Vallies, Hills & Dales in the most delightful Confusion, & at the distance of 17 Versts the glittering Cupolas of Moscow beaming in Asiatic Splendour terminates the View.

I will not repeat the Luxuries of the Table, tho' everything pass'd as in an Enchanted Palace. One would have taken little Durassoff for the Dwarf rather than the Knight Errant of the bright Domain. We wander'd about in different groups after Dinner till the Theatre assembled us again in the Evening. In the interval of Play & Farce they danced a Ballet, nevertheless he made the humblest apologies about the Misery of everything we witness'd ' because all his people were engaged at the Harvest & it was impossible to him to assemble any except the few we saw ! ' The Theatre was perfectly elegant & the performance Capital.



Every half hour Trays of all sorts of Fruits, Cakes, Lemonade, Tea, Essences & Ices were circulated amongst the Audience & aromatic perfumes were burn'd throughout the entire place. . . .

I am glad I did not send this before as I have just receiv'd my Father's Letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup> & various other Letters which it is most satisfactory to be able to acknowledge. I cannot enter into further particulars than that after a talking over the affair of my return the Princess offer'd to conduct me to the Water's edge at Petersburg, but as I know this expedition would be a compleat sacrifice to *my* Convenience I suggested Riga which tho' it will cost her the fatigues of a tremendous Journey, will be a rescue from the Circumstances which would render the other at this period extremely irksome. So stands the affair at present. If nothing interferes I think about April we shall set out for the confines of Poland, visit the Princess's Estate at Krouglo, & so thro' Courland make the best of our way to Riga by which I shall escape all the horrors of the Finland Gulph.

And now I find I have room to spare. I believe I will fill up the Chinks with another Story which is more curious than you will be inclined to think because it is one of the most National vestiges of antiquity existing which with the peculiar Costume of the People ! their Musical Instruments ! Village amusements ! Auguries ! & Superstition ! prove that from the strong similitude with the Greeks in these matters both have drawn their Origin from the self same Nation ; and perhaps 'tis the most amusing circumstance arising from a Russian Tour to witness in the Peasantry of the present day a living picture of the remotest Ages ! Another observation to prove which is that in all the Country Sports faithfully preserved to the present day there is not one whose origin may not be clearly traced to Pagan practices only explained by Heathen Fables the then objects of universal reverence. But the Vapour Bath, that universal panacea in this Country remains to illustrate itself in the present instance of Sophia's Marriage (Matty's *Femme de Chambre*) which took place here the other day with infinite *éclat*.

The solemnities of the day before marriage consist in being bless'd by the Images & going to the Bath. Tho' I had attended several Weddings in Church I never had the Courage to suffocate myself in the Cause of seeing things with my own eyes. However

I was resolved not to quit the Country without doing so, & therefore here goes for the Operation from beginning to end !

The Bride elect dissolved in tears sat at the top of a Table (previous to the bathing business) which was laid out with emblematic Fruits. Presently after the Bridegroom presented her with her Toilette & then disappear'd & was conducted to *his* bath by his Companions ! This Toilette consisted of every necessary article together with Rouge & white paint. A group of girls then set up what sounded a sort of Requiem call'd *Pesui Swad bachmia* !<sup>1</sup> As I was curious to root into the marrow of the business, I was resolved to comprehend the meaning of what was sung, which has been sung time out of mind ; and many of these allegoric compositions still remain in the Slavonian dialect, the change of name only being necessary to make it perfectly appropriate. Here then is a specimen of one amongst fifty of the same nature which was sung at the pitch of their voices.

' On the top of a high Mountain dark with Forests were seen A Flock of Wild Geese & a group of Swans. A young Cygnet Stray'd in amongst the Geese who all began to peck at her And drive her off ! On which the Cygnet cried out, " Oh ! do not treat me so in pity ! for 'tis much against my Inclination that I find myself where I am, & nothing but the Tempest could have forced me in amongst you ! " Alas ! this is the picture of our dear Sophia whom we are about to lose, who finding herself entangled in a troop of Hymeneals weeps with bitterness, & like the young Cygnet Cries, " Do not treat me harshly good people, 'tis not from My own impulse I am come amongst you, but the Kitibka And the horses of Timothy have driven me hither ! " '

We then attended her to the Bath with all her young Companions amounting to between 30 and 40 Girls who assisted in undressing her in the outer Chamber & then led her in a flood of tears naked into the Bath. They then took off their own Cloaths & after scouring her to their hearts' content danced round about in all their National Dances Clapping their hands & drinking Wine which was dispensed by another Eve who sat with a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other, her long tresses falling down about her Shoulders which like all the others was the only Covering

<sup>1</sup> Wedding songs.

they could boast. They then set up a universal song of which this that follows is the translation.

‘ A wild Pigeon dipping itself in the Sea after having flutter’d its beautiful pinions cried, “ And can I quit the Waters ? How soar above the high & rugged Mountains ? But the Cold of Winter comes ! Its Frosts will penetrate ! The snow will cover the entire ground ! In spite of myself I *must* quit the Waters. In spite of myself I *must* quit the dangers of these rugged Shores ! ” In this manner & with these reflections our dear Companion Sophia bathes and paints her face with red and white & blackens her eyebrows like Jet ! After which she bursts into tears & exclaims “ How can I quit my Father ? How abandon my Mother ? ’Tis in spite of myself I quit my Father ! ’Tis in spite of myself I bid adieu to my Mother ! ” ’

I believe we stay’d above an hour at the Bath which became the most festive scene imaginable. They Colour’d themselves for sport in the most ridiculous manner and sang & danced like a Troop of Bachanals while the Bride continued mute and in a flood of tears. At length she was conducted back to the House & again took her seat at the Table while all her Companions sang the following Song.

‘ Here then begins the marriage of our dear Sophia. All the young Girls stand with her about the Table, and even take Honourable places, but she is herself above them all, tho’ ’tis She who makes the humblest bow to her Companions Whilst she ruminates seriously on thoughts which do Not torment their joyous hearts ! “ How ” she thinks, “ can I bear to reflect on the idea of a severe Father-in-Law ? How can I bear to think on the idea of a severe Mother-in-Law ? I must call her in spite of myself Mother ; she would be offended if I did not. Oh ! how I must trample on my pride to call my Father-in-Law Father & my Mother-in-Law Mother ! ” ’

After several trifling ceremonies the whole affair ended in a very handsome Supper, & the next day the Couple were married.

I am so sleepy, dearest Harriet, that I have not power to keep my eyes open, nor if I had millions for it to tell you another Story ! Matty is in a Profound Sleep in the next Room. So Good Night !

TO ANNE LATHAM<sup>1</sup>Moscow May 15<sup>th</sup> 1807

"You are the Cato of your Sex all the world over, sweetest Miss Anne, & have through the virtue thereof applied all your principles of moderation, justice & truth as interpreters to my Silence rather the vile exaggerations of jealousy which need only cast its own discolour'd Shadows to darken me into a delinquent. But esteeming you as I do I cou'd be no more a Delinquent in your mind than you cou'd be a green ey'd Dragon in mine, & tho' Months have interven'd since your delightful Budget reach'd these Realms yet so faithfully have I preserv'd your impression within my thoughts (as faithfully I'll be bould to say as it lies right before me on the seal of your last Letter<sup>2</sup>), that it is to satisfy my own garrulity & not your tenacity if I recapitulate the sundry & manifold obstacles which have risen like Mountains between me & my Pen during the long interval of my Silence. Oh! God knows, 't wou'd have been but to draw you under the Pall of Misfortune which has blacken'd this devoted House ever since the death of Prince Daschkaw had I written one syllable within the last 4 months! You may conceive the effects of such a loss to his Family, but I shou'd be sorry you suffer'd so far as even to imagine the scenes that it has occasion'd.<sup>3</sup> To perpetuate her Name to the latest posterity has ever been the foible of the Princess (if Foible it can be call'd which originates in her wish of immortalising her friendship with Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup>), & the sense of this aggravation became most keen at the moment of contemplating its utter extinction. A Circumstance however has beam'd out from amidst the sorrows of his loss & since it is of a most consolatory nature to this entire Household I will keep your thoughts a little longer in the Daschkaw Family than I had at first intended since justice requires some participation in pleasure after having inoculated you with our woes.

Peradventure it will appear strange to you to hear that a new personage has appear'd upon the Scene in the interesting amiable

<sup>1</sup> Anne, daughter of John Latham of Meldrum, County Tipperary. She married in 1812 as his second wife William (Hare), 1st Earl of Listowel.

<sup>2</sup> The head of the goddess Minerva.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 277 *et seq.*

& very charming Person of young Princess Daschkaw ! But so it is ! 20 years ago she enter'd at the age of 15 into the Honors of this treacherous Life which smil'd upon her opening career in a splendid marriage with Prince Daschkaw that was soon however converted into a dreary monument in which this long period of her existence has been silently consumed ! Not from the conduct of her husband but from the ceaselessness of his Mother's anger on the subject of an engagement form'd without either her knowledge or approbation at a period when her omnipotence at the Court of Russia might in every worldly consideration have ensured him a much higher establishment. 4 Years pass'd without any species of intercession availing with her even so far as to induce her to see her Son during which period (ended by a temporary reconciliation) & even to the prolong'd one of his death a system of bitter calumny was practiced against her Daughter-in-law by all who encircled her in order to flatter her decision. For oh ! great Cato ! well thou knowst the Character or Happiness or Sacrifice of an Individual is as nought in the Minds of Courtiers who to be such must have abandon'd all those qualities which irradiate thy Name !

The Prince tho' eternally solicited to free himself from those ties by applying to Imperial Power for a divorce determinedly refused, & tho' for 7 or 8 years before his Death Circumstances necessitated his alienating himself from her Society yet his very last thought was of Her, & his idea which she cherish'd with idolatry sustain'd her through the Martyrdom of her Misfortunes till the Hope or wish of Life itself seem'd extinguish'd in his Loss. Conceive her Situation on receiving this dreadful News in a dreary country abode which was her exile for years & which her Husband's death forfeited to his Heir ! The Act of Provision He had made for her independence She tore in an agony at the idea of being his Survivor. His heir has been thro' Life her persecutor & bitter enemy<sup>1</sup> ; & she well knew the disapprobation of his Mother had long Given her over as a Victim to misfortune. For several days she lay in a state of utter insensibility little imagining even in her dreams the revolution that her Destiny was weaving in the Mind of the Princess who immediately on the fatal event of her Son's death resolv'd on transferring to Her the material affections he

<sup>1</sup> His sister Mme. Scherbenin.

cou'd no longer share. Then for the first time in her Life She wrote to her & gave her letter to the charge of M<sup>me</sup> Noroff & Countess Worontzoff who in the midst of Snow & Hurricanes reached her exile & more dead than alive *brought her to Moscow a few weeks after the death of her Husband*. Conceive the meeting of the two Princesses for the first time in their Lives, & the first link of Sympathy being struck by their common mourning ! I will pass this over & all the gradations of Personal Knowledge which at first kept us breathless with apprehension that the *past* might occupy their thoughts to the injury of the present moment, but Thank Heaven I can speak of them *now* as of a mother & daughter seemingly born to fulfil the happiness of each other. The Young Princess occupies apartments under this Roof & will remain our inmate till October when she removes into a beautiful new House that has been purchased for her by the Princess. She is the continual object of all our interest, & such is the sweetness of her nature, the rectitude of her heart, & the cheerfulness of her manners (all arising in common from the innocence of her past Life) that the acquisition we have made in her Society wou'd please & delight us independent of the motives of retribution which make one feel that every instance of the Princess's affection towards her is like a miraculous indemnification from Heaven, not to mention the source of Happiness which She is become to her Mother-in-law at a period of such a calamitous visitation as the death of her Son.

So here then is a Rose bush blooming from his grave as the saying is, tho' it is precisely the very point that were I not a rank Irish woman shou'd not stand foremost within your View at the moment I might number over the blighting hindrances of this dismal Winter to all Species of correspondence. But had nothing else existed to prevent my writing, my own perpetual indisposition wou'd have been enough in all conscience. Don't I hear you at this moment making civil enquiries about my health ? Well then in reply I can with truth assure you that at present I have only to complain of pityless colds in my head which tho' they ought to strike compassion from the rocks will meet no other fate I am convinc'd than that of insult from your adamant heart. Oh ! ye Gods ! How you are to be envied & every Mortal alive excepting my self who am doom'd to trundle through the Pilgrimage of

Life with such a deplorable Drag upon the wheels of my very existence !

Well, Well, Hearken, for I am only going to moan over a cruel disappointment which circumstances at present must smother into silence, & which You too will sympathise in I am perfectly aware ! 'Tis on the subject of Matty's returning with me & paying a Visit at Home. After such an absence as hers has been the temptation of indulging her enthusiastic wish of seeing her Friends & Country once more again (aided by the opportunity of accompanying me) were motives too strong even to resist the obstacles foreseen in the Princess's affection. This very affection we had every hope might be moulded into the generosity of a Sacrifice, & I contemplated with joy the period when my arrival at Home might be really eventful in domestic pleasure by the surprise of Matty's unexpected return, when the death of Prince Daschkaw plunged our Schemes into the common abyss which has been so fatal to the hopes of this entire household ! In a revolution of such a Nature Matty wou'd not think of seperating herself from the Misfortunes of her Friend ; & the Princess openly protested to me as well as all the World in an agony of tears that she cou'd not survive her Seperation from one whom she consider'd as her own child & the strongest tye which held her to this miserable Life. So ends this affair for the present ; & as it is the greatest sacrifice that cou'd be made by Matty, so much the more she pleases herself even in the bitterness that can prove her affection & self devotion for the happiness of the Princess. But *She* is the Heroine of a Romance, & 'tis only I (grovelling Luggage of Mortality that I am !) who groan like Caliban in darkness pinch'd by unknown Fingers & intolerable Cramps. Like Caliban too I lie in saying what I do, for I can rear myself up above my disappointment & erect my judgement aloft in momentary approbation. You will see me then sweetest Lady Anne in a short time (Eleanor & me) returning upon your Shoulders like Hudibras & Ralpho after their adventure with the Bears ! But our wits are still ahinge betwixt Riga & St Petersburg. Yea, I am almost inclin'd to apprehend that Poland is a Feather (& bad luck to that abominable Bonaparte) which I must never hope to flourish in my Cap of Kingdoms. Perhaps all for the best, as the journey to Petersburg will be shorter for the Princess whose health is far from Strong & who (tho' better infin-

itely than she has been) suffer'd several weeks' confinement lately from Swellings in her Feet & a return of the Skirvus in her back which so much alarm'd us all last Summer. Anne Simonovna, the Young Princess, & all her retinue are to join the expedition, & I trust you, my dear & solemn Cato, will not fail to watch the flight of Birds & other Omens propitious to the happiness of seeing you again. In spite of our woes the Princess has turn'd Anna Petrovna, Matty & me Headlong out into the gay Processions & Galas which mark the period of *Spring* in these Realms when its approach becomes almost an object of Religious Worship ! The remnants of Pagan Ceremonies (God forgive us !) are so mingled in the practices of the Greek Church that I believe in my Conscience we have been solemnising without our knowledge the Tag end of those very May Day Ceremonies which scandaliz'd *ould Cato* near two thousand years ago amongst the Runagates of Rome who all the world knows were no better then they shou'd be & prefer'd their blackguard Saturnalias to his advice. But don't be alarm'd for I'll give you my oath if you have a mind that whatever the ancient origin of these Processions may be we (no more than the rest of the population of Moscow) never budg'd out of the Carriage which was wedg'd in amidst a File of gallant Equipages keenly inspected by the Police Officers who gallop'd like Wild Fire by our Side. Oh, Heavens ! the senselessness of all these practices ! Why during Easter Week you w<sup>d</sup> have imagined that all Moscow had gone mad if you had suddenly dropt down from another Planet & seen the entire Town crowded with coaches & sixes stuff'd full of Ladies & Gentlemen in (almost) Court dresses. But sh<sup>d</sup> you ask what the object of all this means, I don't believe the essence of the Russian Intellect cou'd furnish you with a Reply.

I will not tire you therefore with describing what we had the Dullness nevertheless to repeat several times for hours & hours together, while we left the Princess at Home regulating & systemising her Cabinet of Natural History which she unpack'd for the first time, tho' it has been lying up stairs in trunks near 30 years, in order to make it a present to the University of Moscow. We have had therefore nothing before our eyes but Minerals & Fossils & Animals in every State of Hideosity ; Tortoises, Shells, & petrifications ; Stones, Marbles, & crystalizations ; Corals,



Agates, jems, mosses, ores, Skeletons, Butterflies & God knows what ! 'Tis really a delightful destination of what may be call'd the Fruit of her Travels, for it was during her stay abroad that she made this collection herself. Besides the Museum of Moscow is extremely poor in specimens of this Nature. She has given Matty splinters from all these Rarities ; & the Professor, who is overseeing the removal of his precious Luggage safe & sound to his University, has taken Matty's ignorance to heart & most good-naturedly has made for her a Catalogue & the nicest classification imaginable of all the contents of her little atom of a Cabinet. In short the Princess has been acting of late precisely as if she was already Dead. Her Legacies to her friends She has already given in advance of those sort of memorandums which are to exist as monuments of her esteem, amongst which Presents have been sent to the Emperor & Empresses & in return Letters have been receiv'd of the handsomest acknowledgements, especially one from the young Emp. Elizabeth most charmingly express'd indeed, but receiving it (a Cameo Medallion of an unusual size cut in the perfect likeness of Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup> & encircled in brilliants) as a symbol of the strongest sympathy that Friendship cou'd devise. All this will give you an idea of the Channels in which her thoughts run respecting Her own Life, which nevertheless in my opinion (& almost every Body else's) is likely to last these dozen years to come ; but still all this is very melancholy & depressing. We are now waiting the arrival of young Count Worontzoff, a fine young man between 16 & 17 whom the Princess has appointed Joint Heir with the son of her Brother (late ambassador in London) & who is to combine the Title of Prince Daschkoff with his own if the Emperor consents. As soon as his visit is accomplish'd we shall remove from Moscow & then my operations commence. . . .

*Monday 17<sup>th</sup> of May*

" The Post is going out today, & I must put Elbows to work in order to fold up this Herculean sheet of paper. . . . But the Post office plays one such slippery tricks that all faith & Hope & Charity are with me utterly destroy'd. After this confession I had better vanish quickly from before your eyes, oh thou august Cato ! To tell you I love you most sincerely w<sup>d</sup> only be a stronger motive of repulsion after what has escaped from the irritation of my Pen.

Well you see what one comes to in quitting the Shadow of your Catonic Wing !! But in spite of Fate I do love you most sincerely, & sh<sup>d</sup> be grieved you did not so far pardon me my transgressions as to drop a briny tear over my destruction shou'd I be wreck'd upon the Swedish or Danish Coast & following my marine transubstantiations ultimately be fasten'd by the fingers of Fate in the shape of a Barnacle to the bottom of a Trading Vessel which may sail up with colours Flying into the Cove of Cork. But whatever be my Doom it must not be forgotten by you, my sweetest Lady Anne, that I am most grateful for your past kindness, & that in common with your Household it adds both to the memory & anticipation of one of the greatest pleasures of my impending Resurrection in the Land of my Forefathers. So the Lord of his infinite mercy guide you through our manifold Troubles !

Adieu & Believe me Ever most truly yours

K. W.

*To ANNA CHETWOOD*

*June 16<sup>th</sup> 1807. MOSCOW.*

“ . . . My departure is the present motive of our operations. Every Evening we make excursions to the exquisite Environs of Moscow in open Carriages, & wander amongst the beautiful improvements of Neskushna, Astanka, Tzaritzen &c. &c. &c. Oh indeed these places are lovely beyond measure ! The Convents & Monasterys too, which are encircled with Walls & Turrets like ancient Fortifications, are objects of our examination, and the celebrated one of Donskoy which domineers over the Asiatic Moscow was the last where we paid our devotions and drank Lemonade like so many smoking Turks under the Shade of weeping Birch which veils the entire Country, and through the green branches of which all the yellow Domes & gilded Towers & Crosses blaze from amidst the Kremlin with the most magnificent splendour. Orloff's Garden is delightful ; it is situated on the side of a Mountain & broken into an infinite variety of walks & hills & dales, Temples, Baths & precipices. By the by, they make use of the bark of birch trees in erecting the out of door edifices, & you have no idea what a pretty effect it has. The summer houses & Temples look as if they had been planted by the hand of nature. Thanks to the English Gardeners who came over the Dutch taste

is universally declining ; but as to the matter of that thanks either to English or German or French or Swedish, for everything agreeable or tasteful one meets with in this Country, were it not for these extraneous advantages, would cut as sorry a figure as our block of a Lady of Loretto does now that the offerings of pious Europeans & Christian Potentates are withdrawn !

The Princess has enter'd most goodnaturedly into our wish of *rummaging for Russia* in this Country ; and as the Merchants & Peasants still preserve their ancient practices she order'd a Russian Entertainment in the House of Elic Alexovitch who is a sort of Patriarch to the Sect of Roskolnics. This Man was born the subject of the Dolgoroukys but purchased his Liberty for £2000 Sterg, and is one of the richest Merchants in Moscow. He is quite a portrait of the perfection of Human Nature at the advanced age of 80 ; simple, cheerful, active & benevolent with the most beautiful features & Silver Beard on a magnificent height of Stature render'd more striking by his ancient Russian attire. In his capacity of Sectarian he amused me more than in that of Merchant, as a gigantic dinner was its only symbol ; but as Sectarian he conducted us to his Churches & Hospitals & Convents & Monasterys which surround his dwelling in a very considerable Circle. He explain'd many of the peculiarities of his calling, the object of which (in common with the Catholics & Greeks) is *unpolitical* because it is to shut up his fellow creatures in perpetual Confinement & uselessness to the industry of the State. There are as many branches here amongst the Sectarians as in England, & amongst them one who make it a Duty to procure amongst themselves a first born Male Child of a Woman who has never been married & to drink its blood, & eat its flesh at the Sacrament ! Lord help us ! how very seldom one is recompensed for a spirit of examination in any other way than the discovery of some new monument of human folly ! But how could I have written to the end of this page without venting my rage against one of you (I forget which) who wonder'd to the greatest degree at my never mentioning the Armies or the political situation of Russian affairs. Heavens above ! You may as well wonder at my not talking Chinese or Arabic ! Why, there is not one human being in this Imperial Realm who has not been hermetically seal'd at both ends these 8 months, indeed this year.

PETERSBURGH July 15<sup>th</sup>

" There's for you ! Look at the date & you will find a Month has pass'd since I wrote the above. I will leave you to guess the Circumstances which occupied me during the period previous to my departure, & I will take you back to Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> of this Month which was the day we quitted Moscow.

The Princess with Matty & me in her Coach, the young Princess with Anna Petrovna in hers, the Maidens in their respective Kibitkas and Ellen in my Carriage, together with Ivan Alexandrovitch the trusty Police Officer of the Princess in his Kibitka & all the Servants & Cossacks who came to take care of us by the way ! So did we advance by slow degrees to the beautiful Convent of Voskrisensky (the New Jerusalem) where Melchisideck the Archimandrite receiv'd us in the Apartments of Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup> fitted up with its walls. The following day we visited all its exquisite environs, and after dinner we proceeded to Klin 90 Versts from Moscow where we slept. Tuesday therefore was the doleful day of separation, & I have written since that time such volumes to Matty, the Princess, Anna Petrovna & the Princess Anne Simonovna on the subject that I am resolved I will pass it over as tho' no woe was in the Case ! All the party return'd to Moscow, and Eleanor & I took our seats in my Carriage with Kuzma & Antoine (two of the Princess's Servants) on the Coach seat & 4 Horses abreast which drove night & day like Lightning over the Wooden Roads. Ivan Alexandrovitch, the trusty Police Officer, follow'd in his Kibitka with my provisions for the way, and of course I had nothing to do but to Fan myself as he battled for the Horses, paid the Postillions, order'd Eggs & Hot Water for my tea, the only articles with which the Cottages furnish travellers excepting Milk which is the best in the World.

Sunday Morning we stop'd within a few miles of Petersburg at Tzarsko Selo, a Palace belonging to the Emperor & built by Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup>, which I examined & so arrived here Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> July at the House of the Baron d'Hoggier who was Dutch Ambassador here during the time of Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Baroness Hoggier is *own* Niece to Princess Daschkaw & an old acquaintance of mine.<sup>1</sup> Her husband I knew but little of before, but I am

<sup>1</sup> Anne, daughter of Colonel Alexander Poliansky, Court Chamberlain, and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Count Roman Woronzow.

excessively pleased with his benevolent roughness and worth. He is a great Castle of a Man with large features & agreeable Countenance possessing a great deal of sense. This is the fourth day I have been here, & so many things have I had to do & to say & to think of that in short I have not had the power of announcing my approach to Patrick's Place,<sup>1</sup> & was tempted by this Letter being half finished to do so through you ; so I authorize you to come down upon my Father for half the postage. I am to go down in a Barge from this door, as the House is situated on the Neva, on Friday the 23rd of this Month to Cronstadt where I shall step into my old berth on board of Cap<sup>tn</sup> Clark's Ship 'The Good Intent,' the same which brought Matty & the same in which I came to Russia. There now, how easily I can give you the result in two words of what has cost me such plagues & negotiations & note writings & tormenting of half a dozen of my acquaintance ! My ancient Friend Mr Cavanaugh I found here, that invaluable being for active exertion in everything that could forward my affairs. Conceive what a dead Stranger I am almost to him, & yet the excellent Man works himself like a Horse about my passport & about my Trunks & about putting my name in the Gazette (for everyone who leaves this Country must announce their departure 3 times in the public papers) & about the detail of all my torments ! . . .

Yesterday the Peace between the Emperor & Bonaparte was announced. This House is just opposite the Fortress<sup>2</sup> from whence the Cannon roar'd all day ; & illuminations blazed all night through the Town. Heaven knows whether these are to be taken as demonstrations of real joy. If they are, they are only a proof that amongst the Miracles of the Day *old Bruin* is transform'd into an Ass ! But I shall be chain'd in a Kibitka & sent to Siberia if I don't hold my tongue. . . . 'Tis the general observation here that the Illumination last Night for the Peace was demonstrative of the public *sensation*, & if so no great approbation can be augur'd for it was as shabby as possible, and as we drove through the streets it gave me the idea of *Death* in Milton when he 'grin'd horribly a ghastly smile' ; but Russia is a mere blubber cheek'd boy who to get a Holyday will risk a thrashing. This Peace I look upon as no better, & in my opinion Bonaparte has the Rod in his own

<sup>1</sup> Her father's house in Cork.

<sup>2</sup> Peter and Paul.

hands. Everyone rails against the English for being such dilatory Allies. The Ignoramuses (who are 99 to one) snarl against England, the others attribute it to the opposition principles which were at the Helm, but all the Bears to a Cub grumble against us.

Conceive the state of ignorance I am in about politicks ! I never see Newspapers, they are & have been so long prohibited ; & I hear nothing but *Mushroom Lies*. These enrage me to such a degree that I now never ask where the World is rolling to, & I should not be at all surprised when I go home to find that Ireland had floated Westwards and chuck'd against the other Hemisphere.

I must fly. Give my blessing & love to everyone.

Most affectionately &c. &c. &c.

KATHERINE.

### TO HER FATHER

PETERSBURGH, *at the House of* BARON D'HOGGIER.

July 28<sup>th</sup> 1807

" This is the 17<sup>th</sup> day I have been here, my dearest Father, so deranged in all my plans of passing to England by the first fair wind (from my having left Moscow without a passport) that I have been discouraged from even writing home guessing that what I reported of my intentions by one Post must be contradicted by the following. The cause which has given rise to all this torment is the Princess's having declared that my Padroгна<sup>1</sup> being signed by the Governor General of Moscow & Gazetted (according to the general usage of this Country) superseded every other right and that a Passport would be superfluous. Matty has written to you since I left her & I have written to Anna,<sup>2</sup> so I will not go over old ground. I will continue to relate the exertions which have been made both by my English and Russian friends upon the subject. Baron d'Hoggier has been three times with the Governor here ; our English Banker Mr Cavanaugh likewise has work'd Heaven & Earth in the affair, but to no effect ! At the present moment the strictness on matters of this kind is inflexible, & although I offer'd bribery in order to be enabled to sail with Cap<sup>tn</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Permission to hire post horses.

<sup>2</sup> Anna Chetwood. See above, p. 30, note.

Clark who was making every delay in his power for me at Cronstadt, yet even that was of no avail, & here I have been obliged to wait till I was announced again in the Petersburg Gazette three times, and then till my Padroгна & former Passports were handed thro' different Offices & ultimately lodged three days with Count Roumantzow in the College de Commerce from whence they will be extricated tomorrow.

Variety, to be sure, of various kinds has fill'd up this interval, & the Baron & Baroness do everything from Morning till Night to entertain me. I often go to the Palace of the Hermitage, & go on Boating partys on this magnificent River, to the public gardens, to the Institution<sup>1</sup> &c. &c. &c, and nothing can be more beautiful than Petersburg is at this period by Night & Day, if Night it can be call'd which at the darkest hours gives light enough to see to read & work. But then while one is ajar as to their movements, almost every species of amusement seems like an interruption. The only satisfaction I console myself with is my acting like a sounding Line to Matty's Spring expedition & clearing away all the obstacles which might have been embargos upon her return home. . . . I never cease writing to Moscow, to the two Princesses, Matty & Anna Petrovna, & I get Letters from them every post, so that I scarcely feel as if I had parted with them yet. I have by the Princess's desire written notes to the Princess Proso-roffsky & Countess Protasoff, *Les Dames d'Honneur*, to lay my adieus at the feet of the Empresses since I could not have the honor to do so in person from the uncertainty of my stay here &c. &c. &c.

I go out more frequently than I could wish, but it cannot be avoided as Countess Worontzow, whose son is to inherit Princess Daschkaw's Estate, lives almost next door & we are engaged to her eternally tho' I get a headache every second Night. In short in this manner have I gone thro' this delay, & really so much do I like Baron d'Hoggier from the Dutch originality of his Nature & perfect gentlemanlikeness of both his *in* & *exterior* that there is no engagement I can have more agreeable than his society. His politeness & friendliness to me can only be equal'd by Mr Cavanaugh's who has just gone to Cronstadt (as the Vessels are lying there) to arrange with the most trusty Captain & to see the

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Saint Catherine.

best Vessel that would be advisable for us to sail in. The d'Hoggiers are to conduct me to Oranienbaum & Cronstadt. M<sup>me</sup> d'Hoggier (I don't know why I have not mention'd her) is all good-nature & an excellent Woman. Their House is on the border of the grand Neva, a lovely situation & only to be equal'd in my opinion by Venice. Just in the same stile we go about the river in little palanquin'd Boats which lye in swarms upon the shores.

I write because you might feel anxious to hear from me, tho' I acknowledge I have given you no information. If you knew how many things I have to do, you would not be surprised at the abomination of this Letter.

Adieu my dearest Father,

K. W.

To HER SISTER ALICIA

*On board the Elbe, Cap<sup>tn</sup> LANDELLS. August 4<sup>th</sup> 1807*

" Surrounded as I am by the Monsters of the Deep, your Society my dear enters too naturally into the Den of my imagination to distinguish it from your Motley Brethren which encircle me in the shape of scaly Leviathans, Sharks, Seals, Mermaids and Watry Visions dire ! Therefore do I lash myself to my Pen & guide it to the communication of a few words previous to my landing, fearful as experience makes me of the hindrances which I may encounter on my entrance in to your Hemisphere. I am so happy in my present abode, so enchanted with my Ship & accomodations that 'tis on Land I expect to reel, smell Tar, and complain of the abominations incident to travelling. I am in earnest for what with the broad good humour of my Captain, the perfect cleanliness of my Berth, the Music of the Waves (which is so innocent when I compare it to the Combustion of Courtly intrigue & undulation), the rough truth & simplicity of my Sailors, the soundness of my sleep, and the absence of that feverishness which human folly calls *Life* in the exalted Circles of this World, that merely because these comforts are compress'd within the narrow Compass of a Ship prejudice shall not tempt me to deny their tranquillizing powers upon my mind & body, both of which have been kept eddying in uncertainty for the last three weeks.

You know 'tis now a Month since I parted from Matty. You



also know what a prosperous Journey I made to Petersburg & of my abode at Baron d'Hoggier's because I wrote to Anna Chetwood ordering her to communicate all I said, since which I wrote to my Father. Well then, were it not for your unreasonable Curiosity it would content you if I was to tell you now that I am in the Ocean & so much at the mercy of the winds & waves that nothing more is to be done till they think proper to drive me on Shore. But inutilities are all that feed your Mind, like unto the Greenland Monster that sucks in poisonous Insects above the waves and drops swollen into the Deep to be the prey of its rapacious neighbours ! Amongst these inutilities is the detail of my Petersburg peregrinations which had they been attended with any decision or plan would really have been uncommonly agreeable.

Baroness d'Hoggier, Princess Daschkaw's Niece, I have been in habits of personal & epistolary intercourse with ever since my arrival in Russia, & the kindness of her partiality made me decide on giving a preference to her House during my delay at Petersburg; but till my arrival there I did not know her Husband who had been on the borders of the Black Sea & was not long return'd previous to my quitting Moscow. He is a most gentlemanlike agreeable & original Man about 50 years of age, as big as a House, benevolent in the expression of his countenance & singularly sincere & delightful in his manners. He was the Dutch Ambassador at the Courts of Constantinople, Spain, Portugal, & afterwards to Russia during the reign of Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup>. Disapproving of the Revolution in his own Country he determinately renounced all the brilliant appointments which were again & again proffer'd to him by the succeeding parties ! He discharged his Servants, sold his Equipages & Houses, and with a very trifling sum of money was going to turn it to a mercantile account at Odessa when Catherine struck by the heroism of his conduct named him to a post in the Russian service of equal profit and honor. This he refused from the apprehension that it might be mistaken for a *political job*, and he literally did strip himself of everything he possess'd upon Earth & retired to the borders of the Black Sea. 'Tis now five or six years since he return'd to Petersburg & married M<sup>lle</sup> de Poliansky, *demoiselle d'Honneur* to her Majesty. Fortune has ever since smiled upon them. They sometimes return to Odessa where they have bought a considerable estate. They have a Charming House at Petersburg

& three beautiful Children ; they are the picture of domestic Contentment, Dutch cleanliness & happiness ! . . .

*Thursday [5<sup>th</sup> August]*

" . . . This is the 5th day we have been aboard & we have advanced only 200 miles in the Gulph. Really these long voyages are nothing at all, & I am Sailor enough to hate the little Holyhead passages ! But if I ever make a trip to Constantinople or *to the Moon* I will take Grammars with me & resolve on learning a Language on the way. Here I have an entire Cabin to myself, not the slightest smell of bilge water or Tar, everything clean & comfortable, & two Captains on Deck to direct our operations. One of them is going home after having sold his Ship to the Russian Government.

When I was in Petersburg two years ago I wrote you word of the treasure I had found in M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh. Well, I protest I have experienc'd such acts of friendship at his hands as I have no language to express. Tho' he has a world of business on his hands yet during the three weeks I was at Petersburg he never let a day elapse without slaving himself in my affairs, not only on the subject of my name being publish'd in the Gazette but also in trying to supercede that necessity through the exertion of his interest so that I might sail with Clark as I had set my heart upon, and then getting my passport & attending its torturing delays in *nine* different offices. All this is easily *said*, but you have no conception what it is to *do* in a Government such as Russia. Think of the blessed Creature who volunteer'd in going to Cronstadt 22 miles from Petersburg to see & chuse a Cap<sup>tn</sup> & a Vessel for me ! And after having discover'd this Ship which is a little Palace, he hired a lovely canopied Barge which was under my Windows at six o'clock on Saturday Morning with twelve Men & his own bearded Archangelists (for they are the trusty Russians) who would not let mortal touch anything but themselves and convey'd all my baggage on board & pack'd up even my writing case for me as if they had been accusom'd to it all their lives, & then like Dragons sat in the Barge to watch my approach while I routed up the Baroness and bid adieu to all the family of that brave Baron who was with all his household *en l'air* half the night long. 'Twas with real regret that I parted with them for the last time !

Immediately I stepped into the Boat, and at the opposite side of the Neva was handed out by Cavanaugh himself who had routed up all his House & prepared an English Breakfast, the first I have seen these two years. He conducted me to his Sister & Niece (most friendly neat nice English Women) with whom I stay'd till eleven o'clock. We then, attended by my squire Eleanor, proceeded again to my Barge, & Cavanaugh took upon himself again all the plagues of going with me to Cronstadt. He took his favorite Archangelists with him & some of the Raikes's Company. In this gallant trim we sail'd from Petersburg on one of the most lovely days that ever beam'd from the Heavens, when suddenly the Wind got up so high that from stress of weather we were compell'd to go on shore at Peterhoff. I will not describe this Imperial Residence because 'tis the one that Matty tells you so much about & where she describes the Fête of Fire & Water she saw there on her first arrival in Russia.

Think of the luck of this contrary wind to me! Had it not been for it, I should have quitted Russia without seeing Peterhoff. Well ma'am, you may amuse yourself with imagining us poor stranded Mariners wandering thro' this enchanted Palace & at length placing ourselves under a lovely group of Trees by the Shore, when M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh who had prepared against all contingencies whistled to his merry Men who presently came laden with all descriptions of cold Meats, fruits & Wines, & down we sat to a Banquet fit for Gods & Goddesses as merry & pleasant as we possibly could be. Afterwards we walk'd about, saw the Waterworks, Statues, Palace, Flower Gardens &c. &c., and so return'd to our Barge again which landed us at Cronstadt at eleven at night.

Cavanaugh arranged accomodations at an English Hotel, & while we were in a profound sleep he flew off at daybreak to Admiral Hanikoff & the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> of the Custom House, bribed the Watch Dogs of those two Dragons, seiz'd a pen, put it into their fingers at the most *illegal* hour, had my Passport signed & flew back to the Hotel to hurry me on board. This operation had cost me two long days when I was going to Petersburg. Judge then of his Cleverness! With his own hands he stowed away all my Beds, Bags &c. &c. on the backs of the Men, & off we flew to the Ship which literally was under Weigh. Nevertheless

he sat down & wrote a Letter of Credit for me on Elsineur that I may get English money ready to expend upon my arrival in that Kingdom, & *while the Ship was sailing* gave me advice how to change my Duckets &c. &c. not forgetting to recommend me in the kindest manner to his Correspondent & to recommend me to the special care of the Captain ; & then, jumping into a Boat, he gained the Shore !

. . . I must tell you a species of disappointment which I omitted to do in its proper place & which Cost me 25 Roubles in addition to all my other expences. I had made a vow once my Trunks were seal'd with the Custom House Seals at Petersburg that no power should make me open them again. All the *Elegantes* however insisted on my going to Peterhoff where was to be a grand Fête which took place last Monday, & one of the *Demoiselles d'Honneur* had offer'd me accomodations in the Palace. What was to be done, tortured as I was to accept & everyone saying it would be an unpardonable contempt if I stay'd in Russia and not attend the Empress's Fête ? Open my Trunks I would not, so all that I had for it was to purchase new cloaths. Baroness d'Hoggier took me to the most fashionable french Milliner, & for a dress Morning bonnet I gave to the amount of three Guineas (25 Roubles) & was to have bought lord knows what *after dinner* when on returning to the House the Baron told me M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh had just been with him & that he had summon'd me to depart the following Morning. So here I am with my cursed french kickshaw of a bonnet which doubtless will be chained neck & heels in England, & I 25 roubles out of pocket ; but tho' I did not see the Fête by night, thanks to that Whiff of Wind I saw Peterhoff by day.

*Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>*

You will perceive dearest A. that eleven long days have elapsed since I began this Letter, but peradventure you'll not divine that I have had a narrow escape from either the fire of the Enemy or being made a prisoner by the Danes ! I will pass over the monotony of my Voyage hitherto & bring you to the Deck yesterday Morning at 8 o'clock when we sail'd up right before the Town of Copenhagen. A Pilot came on board immediately from shore & in broken English puzzled out that England and Denmark had declared War, & pointing to the 3 crown Batteries and floating

Batteries which were all ready primed to fire upon us he added that 400 English Transports full of Troops & several Men of War were lying off Elsineur 20 miles off and that the Danish Guard Ship there had slipped her Cables & sail'd away to Norway ; a strict prohibition had been given to prevent the Pilots going to the British Vessels to guide them through the Sound, & that he did not know why but that prohibition had been taken off that very Morning which made him conclude that the Countrys had come to an accomodation.

Some time afterwards a Gun Boat laden with supplies for Stralsund spoke to us & caution'd Cap<sup>tn</sup> Landels to keep to the Swedish side as we sail'd to Elsineur. As you may conclude we look'd rather foolish at each other, for had an action commenced we had not a single Gun to defend us ! I cannot affect to say I was frightened *for I was too near the danger* & therefore I set about making up my mind for whatever might come to pass. We had a Deplorably slow wind, so that we did not anchor before the Town of Elsineur till 7 in the Evening. I prepared all my Letters for Russia & my Draft upon the Danish Banker for the Cap<sup>tn</sup> Landels to take on Shore when an order arrived to say 'None of the English must attempt to Land !' You may imagine our Consternation ! The Cap<sup>tn</sup> sail'd off to one of the English Ships & did not return till 10 o'clock. In the meantime I knew Matty would have died of distress if she had not receiv'd a Letter from Elsineur, & yet no possible means were there to send one. Just by the dint of good luck a little boat boarded us & through the means of the person on board I had one sent to the Swedish post which eased my mind. We were surrounded by 400 Transports, 12 Men of War & 100 Traders, all English. The Bugle Horn sounded most delightfully, the Military Music play'd, & really nothing could be more thoroughly Warlike ! Just then the definitive answer arrived from the Crown Prince of Denmark 'that Zealand should not be ceded, that he would defend it to the last drop of his blood, and he would bury himself amongst the ruins of old Croninsburg Castle rather than consent to the demands of the English !' Nothing therefore remain'd but for Admiral Gambier<sup>1</sup> to give orders to

<sup>1</sup> James Gambier (1756-1833), later 1st Lord Gambier, English admiral. Commanded the fleet which proceeded to the Baltic against the northern powers in 1807, operating in conjunction with the military commander, Lord Cathcart. For his services in reducing Copenhagen he was raised

Fire upon the Town & Castle, but the Wind did not serve to Land the Troops & therefore the Night pass'd without a battle !

In the meantime we receiv'd orders from Commodore Moth who commands the *Prince William*, our Convoy, to prepare for sailing instantly for England this Morning, which we duly obey'd ; & here we are already out of sight of Elsinour and 'all the fun', as the Sailors call it. Had it been possible bravely to have got into a safe nook or corner, I own I should like to have witness'd the affair which will be tremendous ; and from the circumstances of the Danes (Heaven pity them, they have been used basely !) one cannot doubt of the success of the British. You will say that the Fates have *soaped my Tail* for me, I have so often slip't through the fingers of the Enemy ! And really 'tis amazing my luck now in not being *one* day later, for in that case we should inevitably have been obliged to sail back to Russia as while the Sound was on fire—which it will be tomorrow—the English would not have had time to think of protecting us while they were vanquishing a Kingdom !

Doubtless you will be in a quandary about me ; aye, and sorely disappointed too at my not being nabbed by the Danes to have my Ghost & Hamlet's reel thro' the old Palace to all Eternity. Besides on account of my *Room* at home you would have triumph'd at getting rid of me at all hazzards ; but here I am like Synbad the Sailor coming home upon you after my third adventurous Voyage, & in spite of your teeth I desire I may be treated handsomely & well paying me that deference & respect that my lawful Sovereignty of your mind & body demands !

I will now shut up my Epistle & send it to the Post the instant I arrive in England to console you for the interval of my absence till I see you again in St Patrick's Place. Adieu then !

K. W.

P.S. *Monday 7<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>. Off YARMOUTH*

" This is all I can add. A boat takes this on shore. We shall coast on to Gravesend.

to the peerage, and was later appointed Admiral of the Fleet. In spite of his naval successes he was but a mediocre commander and spent the greater part of his official life on shore, which he much preferred to the sea.

After 5 long Weeks' Voyage tacking *every inch* of the way from Elsineur you may guess how goodhumour'd I feel. Oh the horror of tacking!! I will write as soon as ever I touch English Ground.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> She arrived in Cork by trading steamer from Bristol on October 23, 1807.

*PART III*

MARTHA WILMOT

JOURNAL AND LETTERS FROM RUSSIA  
1806-1808





MARTHA WILMOT  
JOURNAL AND LETTERS FROM RUSSIA  
1806-1808

*To* HER MOTHER

[Moscow] 4<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 1806

“ . . . Since our arrival at Moscow we have had very little time for writing from one cause or another, & I regret excessively that Kitty’s pen has been so silent, for ’tis only the first impressions of things that one sees that one writes without effort. At least I speak for myself. A descriptive letter from Moscow is a thing I am incapable of & to go over the story of every dance or Dinner I happen to go to is too vapid a repetition when the individuals who form our Societys can excite no interest from being totally unknown. However one I will tell you of. It was a Ball given by the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> M. de Beckleshoff to which I alone went as K. would not go without the Princess amongst total strangers. She therefore ferk’d me out in white satin petticoat & a crape dress all trim’d round with the beauteous turkish trimming of which She made honourable mention once. My train was fasten’d up in her fashion, but instead of a ribbon across my shoulder it was the same trimming with a resplendent gold tassel which hung from the shoulder with so peculiar a grace that a Prince Bariatinsky<sup>1</sup> (a man of 65) came expressly the next Eve<sup>g</sup> to compliment the Princess *most* seriously & profoundly upon the subject, which is the reason I have mention’d it for literally it was most laughable the sensation it produced & the gravity with which my Style of tucking up my tail was talk’d of all over the City of Moscow & five versts round. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Prince Ivan Bariatinsky (1740-1811), Russian soldier and diplomat. Formerly Russian Ambassador in Paris. Noted for his extraordinary handsome appearance, which he retained till an advanced age.

*From HER JOURNAL**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> [January]*

" . . . Mr Young, the son of Mr Young the great Agriculturalist, who came over to make observations on the productions, culture and capabilities of the Russian soil on the State of the Peasants &c. &c. call'd here this Eve<sup>g</sup> & was very badly rec<sup>d</sup> by the P. who is insensd at the *nature* of his employment which she thinks tends to overturn the Government & excite discontent in the people. In this idea she is join'd by almost all the noblesse, so that Mr Young finds himself involved in the unpopularity of his profession to a degree that is often highly embarrassing & disagreeable. I cannot say I am very much pleased with his manners as there is neither dignity nor elegance in them, but he stay'd a very short time. . . .

. . . . .

*Friday 10<sup>th</sup> [January]*

" We dined today at the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup>s M. de Beckleshoff, where we met M. & M<sup>me</sup> de Voloieff & a great number of gentlemen. Amongst them was a Prince Sibersky. It was he who had the goodnature to send wine bread & other refreshments to Kitty on the night of her arrival at Moscow, on remarking her to stop at a Cottage & appear fatigued after her Journey which wanted only five versts to come to an end—they made an acquaintance on that occasion. But Prince Sibersky is worth remarking from his Misfortunes, poor Man, as well as from his goodnature. His great grandfather was King of Siberia & when that country was conquer'd the children were taken prisoners & obtain'd Lands in Russia. In the reign of Paul this Prince for no other crime than wishing to save some friend of his from Banishment was seiz'd & with irons round his ancles forced to *walk* barefooted to *Siberia* to the inheritance of his forefathers as a criminal. He was releas'd<sup>1</sup> in a year but his Countenance seems mark'd by melancholy. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Prince Vasili Feodorovich Sibirsky (b. 1761). In reality he was banished to Siberia on account of abuses in the Moscow Commissariat of which he was the head. He was pardoned and recalled on the accession of Alexander I and was subsequently made a senator. He retired in 1808.

12<sup>th</sup> [January] 1<sup>st</sup> O.S.

"... In the [previous] Eve<sup>s</sup> we, K. & I, went to the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> Beckleshoff's Ball to wellcome in the New Year. We went there with M<sup>me</sup> Voloieff & her daughter famous for her Iron Pompadour. There was a Crowd of magnificently dress'd People assembled there & the effect of the room was brilliant to a degree. Robertson display'd some shadowy wonders to amuse the Company from 10 till past 11 o'clock when they sup'd, but his representations were horrible to a degree & such as could scarcely be tolerated in the very lowest order of Fishmongers society; heads were cut off, & Noses besides other surgical operations performed that makes one sick to think of. After Supper which was very splendid trumpets were blown & a transparency of Aurora in her chariot opening the gates of the Morn<sup>g</sup> with the Sun (faintly illuminated) at a distance, & 1806 in the middle of it appear'd at the same moment. Dancing then was begun & salutations for the New Year &c. &c. We danced some Polonaises & stood up for a country dance which being interrupted to go & look at a Balloon *which would not go off*, we took the opportunity of the general rout to make our escape & return home after a most *Hickledepickled* sort of Eve<sup>s</sup>. . .

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> [February]

"Din'd at General Knoring's where we met . . . Prince Bariatinsky, so tall & so spectre like, tho' he is not thin, & his Brother so fat & goodhumour'd looking tho' it was His hand which help'd to do the dreadful act which finish'd the revolution of 1762.<sup>1</sup> Good heavens I have admir'd that man's placid goodnatured face twenty different times & never knew till to-day that I was admiring a Murderer, so little does his exterior denote so execrable a Nature & bloodthirsty a disposition! *Could* he have been work'd up by the spirit of enthusiasm to suppose he was doing an heroic action? Heaven only knows *how* he settles the matter with his own conscience, but it seems that when Paul 1<sup>st</sup> oblig'd him to sit & watch as Chief Mourner by the Coffin of Peter the 3<sup>d</sup> *as a punishment* (& I think a most ingenious one) he betray'd neither remorse nor

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 214, note 3.

any agitation, tho' Count Alexis Orloff (the other) was excessively unquiet & apparently miserable all the time, & he is *no coward*. . . .

1<sup>st</sup> March 1806. *Wednesday*.

"A blank, but indeed the leaf of paper I am going to scribble might almost describe one's life. It cannot be help'd. Our *Sins* too are Negative, for *not* rising early is the principal—but indeed it becomes a very positive one by its consequences & is in my opinion the root of all of mine to a degree that makes my continuing to be lazy absolutely unpardonable. I do *not* get up early, & therefore I do *not* learn Russ fast ; I do *not* learn Italian, I do *not* learn the Guitar tho' I have the power of having a Master for each. Then I do *not* feel contented with myself & therefore am *not* so cheerful as I should be if I fulfill'd the dutys which would really be pleasures in a very short time. I know all this & do *not* reform, so there's a Complaint against myself this 1<sup>st</sup> of March ! I will write a panygeric *next* Month if I can.

. . . . .

*Saturday* [4<sup>th</sup> March]

"... In the Evening the princess, Kitty & I, went to Princess Hovansky's Concert. There we met a Multitude of people, the Grandees of Moscow. Kitty was gratified by seeing Count Orloff & his daughter. The latter is grown very thin & 'tis say'd her Father's selfish inconsiderate love for her leads him into a thous<sup>d</sup> things very hurtful to her health,—the moment after dancing she must hurry home without waiting to grow a little cool, she must ride on Horseback with him in every sort of weather, & so on. Count Orloff I suppose imagines she is of the same Herculean force that he is. There are a hundred storys told of his great strength, & one instance occur'd this Eve<sup>g</sup>. Prince Hovansky who is a large fat Squat Man & the pink of politeness, was reconducting Count Orloff from the concert room to another. The Count requested He would spare himself so much trouble. Prince H. persisted. So did Count O., but suddenly stopping short he told Prince Hovansky since he would not go back to the Concert that he would *carry him*, & instantly taking him by the Collar rais'd him from the ground to the amusement of all those present & no

doubt of the Prince himself as he came back & boasted to every one what Count Orloff had done. 'tis say'd that when young he roll'd up a silver plate like a bit of paper that one prepares to pick their teeth with sometimes, & then unroll'd it with as much ease as I write the story. He could bend 2 Horse Shoes in two with the utmost ease &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. . . .

*Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. N.S.*

" The storm & tempest of to-day is terrific, Wind whistling in every Chink & the Snow driven in whirling Collums, & then in drifts all thro' the air. We have a pleasant prospect for next tuesday's Journey to Troitskoe !

This day three months we arriv'd at Moscow, & uniform as our lives appear yet the retrospect would Shew, were it written in the Compass of one Page, events which to prophecy beforehand one would imagine Great enough to influence the happiness of each of us. The P. has lost a beloved Brother ; A.P. an Aunt that she dearly lov'd, & has obtain'd above a thous<sup>d</sup> Pounds ; K. has realiz'd fairy Visions and pass'd a Winter with Bears in the Capital of the Czars clothed in furs & enclosed in ribb'd ice ; I have done like Kate for the third time, & added to my fortune a thous<sup>d</sup> Pounds. We have seen youth, beauty, &c. &c. fall around us into untimely Dust, & yet we shall go back to the shades of Troitskoe without any change of mind whatever.

*Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> [April, TROITSKOE]*

" Our Life presents so very little variety that my Journal has nothing to record. I write (I should say I *copy*) the Princess's History every day, Kitty translates it, and that occupies our Mornings. . . .

. . . . .

*Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> [June]*

" The day before yesterday M<sup>lle</sup> Pisireff came here to pay her usual visit. She was accompanied by a Lady who appear'd to us to be a french Woman speaking that language excellently, & English like a Stranger. However she prov'd to be a Baroness

Priser whose name had been Patten (they say a Countess). Her g<sup>d</sup> father had perhaps been a Peer of Great Britain & a follower of the House of Stewart. Baroness Priser is excessively ugly & affected looking. That's her first effect, but when She opens into a very cleaver, well judging, delicate minded, spirited Woman (& all these qualitys beam'd forth by circumstances even during her short stay) and that one finds she is the mistress of 8 languages (English, French, Italien, German, Russ, Finnish, Dutch, & *Latin* to crown all) that first impression changes into one of very sincere admiration & respect.

Pisireff is a downright Russian, priding herself upon her jealousy of nature and sitting mouzel'd up in a Shawl with unwash'd hands, pronouncing a vociferous harangue in favour of it as a Noble quality & *enacting* all she says. However to do her justice she fills her situation in life extremely well & understands *business* so as to carry on a Distillery of Whisky for her Brother in Law from which flows all his wealth, & which by the by he spends with his family at Petersbourg while she stays with her old Mother and oversees everything in the Country.

La Baronne Priser from a chain of misfortune has been Governess in two or three familys & has just quitted one (of high consideration in this Neighbourhood) on account of ill treatment & witnessing such mean execrable conduct as well as such personal Beastliness that I will not soil my journal with more than this one specimen. The Master of the House to her utter dismay the very first Eve<sup>g</sup> of her arrival there call'd in a *femme de Chambre* & solaced himself by ordering her to pick from his body the *bugaboos* which Irish cabin children pick from each other's heads for amusement on Sundays, & this scene was frequently repeated. She was thought capricious &c &c. because she used to retire to her room upon these occasions. . . .

Tues<sup>v</sup> 22<sup>d</sup> [July]

“The Widow<sup>1</sup> has been talking of various matters to the P. relative to me, but it seems as if the *possibility* of my going to

<sup>1</sup> Madame Nebalsin. She passed on the substance of this and other conversations to her friend Count Rostoptchin, with unpleasant consequences for Martha Wilmot. See below, p. 400.

Ireland even for one year was to produce anguish which I know not how to combat. Yet everlasting separation like what this impy is dreadful & must not be.

*Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup>*

“ Kitty had a long conversation with the Princess before breakfast this Morn<sup>g</sup>. Such a Conversation ! She has enter’d into all her views, & the P. is to write a letter to-day to the Empress Mother recommending me to *her* protection in case I should have the misfortune to lose my beloved Princess.

*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>*

“ The Letter is written. Indeed I never read one more affecting, more delightful. I don’t know how to describe my sensations on the subject. This care of me & all the tenderness which my beloved Princess marks goes to my heart. She has likewise placed £3000 in the guardianship of the Empress in the Foundling Hospital funds which she protects & encourages !<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following is a translation of this letter from the French in which it was originally written :

TO HER IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPRESS DOWAGER OF RUSSIA.

Madam,

The virtues and humanity so conspicuous in the Character of your Imperial Majesty will I trust excuse the liberty that I take in addressing my very humble request to you. Deign Madam to impart tranquillity to the mind of one *now* upon the verge of the Grave whose life has exhibited a continued series of Mortification !

Having been connected in England with the family of Wilmot and their relations (people of the first consideration there, as well as in Ireland), the Dearest friend whom I ever had, the late M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton, persuaded her young cousin Miss Martha Wilmot to come here and share my Solitude. It is now nearly three years since my retreat has been embellished by her virtues, her talents, her modesty and her friendship ; and perceiving that my Situation demands a continuance of that friendship which I have hitherto experienced from her, she has determined on remaining with me instead of returning home with her eldest sister who had the honour of being presented to you last Summer. Who can more fully appreciate than your Majesty the charms, the resources, and the duties of Friendship, and as on *this score* my obligations to this charming creature can never be repaid except by the most unceasing Solicitude for her happiness, it is in embracing your knees that I entreat of you Madam to become her protectress after my Death. I shall die contented in the persuasion that as long as Miss Wilmot continues in this Country she will enjoy your protection, of which you have my assurance that she is



worthy in every possible Sense. Your Majesty will estimate her merits in becoming acquainted with their possessor, and in giving me a promise in favour of my friend who is the object of this request you will render my last moments happy in proportion to the conviction that I shall feel of having in part at least fulfilled my Duty.

I do not apprehend imposing upon the Kindness of your Majesty by an additional prayer which requires however some explanation. It is now nine years since I made a will approved not only by my own relations but by those of my Husband amongst whom was the respectable Jerobkine and Prince Repnin. I confided this will to the archives of the Foundling Hospital to which I at that time made a trifling donation which I have since repeated at different periods. The Executors of my will were my late Brother and my Husband's cousin Prince Ivan Gagarin. The first of these I have had the misfortune to be deprived of and a similar event may happen with respect to the second. I have therefore requested [blank in MS.] to take upon himself the faithful execution of my will, and to evince how nearly interested I felt on this subject I gave for the use of the Foundling Hospital the sum of four thousand roubles. Wishing on the present occasion to deposit in the funds of the same House the value of £5000 sterling in favour of my friend Miss Wilmot I throw myself at your feet Madam entreating your orders may be issued respecting the accomplishment of my last will as well as to ensure to Miss Wilmot the sum above mention'd which I shall deliver as soon as your Majesty's gracious answer reaches me, which will add the most grateful sentiments to those of veneration and the profoundest respect with which I have the honour to be

Your Imperial Majesty's very humble and obedient

TROITSKO,

PRINCESSE DE DASCHKAW.

13<sup>th</sup> of July 1806.

The original draft of the above letter, in the Princess's handwriting, is preserved in the British Museum.

To this letter the Empress Dowager sent the following reply :

" I have received your Letter, Madame la Princesse, and feel infinite pleasure in assuring you that I estimate as they deserve the motives of your conduct in favour of Miss Wilmot, and that I find in the attachment with which she has inspir'd you the fullest testimony of her merit. I do not hesitate in promising my protection to Miss Wilmot at whatever time she may require it ; and with respect to the dispositions which you wish to make in her favour in the Foundling Hospital, the rules of this Establishment (which impose a sacred duty in executing according to the most exact manner all Testaments sanction'd by those laws of which the Institution is render'd the repository, as also the most scrupulous preservation of the funds confided to it) afford you a perfect certainty that your intentions will be religiously fulfill'd by the council of Tutors.

If an assurance, Madam, on my part can in any degree add to your tranquillity, I give you the most positive one that the laws of the House shall be adher'd to with the most exact fidelity. It is with much Satisfaction that I add to this assurance those sentiments of esteem and kindness with which

I am, Madame la Princesse,

Your very affectionate

PAVLOVSK

MARIA.

24<sup>th</sup> August, 1806.

*Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> [August. Moscow]*

"... In the Eve<sup>g</sup> Kitty & I went to visit M<sup>rs</sup> Halliday and from her I heard to my utter astonishment and horror that I have a declared enemy in M<sup>me</sup> S——<sup>1</sup> and that P.D. listens in Silence to the Calumnys which She spreads against me to everyone who frequents the house of her Brother. This is indeed a new & most unexpected event in my Life. I feel as a first impulse nothing but contempt, but a thousand more painful ones succeed, as I look forward to their effect. Good Heaven, can it indeed be true.

. . . . .

*Tues<sup>y</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"... M<sup>me</sup> Nebalsine & I had a long conversation in her Cabinet on the subject of M<sup>me</sup> Sherbenin's cruel & most unprovoked Calumny. I enter'd openly with her into the circumstances of my life and adventures which renders my conduct in the affair so very embarassing from not knowing how to stay here or how to quit my beloved Princess whose happiness appears to be link'd with my stay. I did not suppose it possible for duty to be so *uncertainly* mark'd in a critical position as mine is, for I literally don't know what I ought to do. . . .

. . . . .

*Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"... The full & entire dominion which Russian Women have over their own fortunes gives them a very remarkable degree of liberty & a degree of independence of their Husbands unknown in England. Is this the reason that *Domestic* happiness is much more frequent there than here? I do not think it is. Morals are purer, and that's the real cause. Here a Woman's powers to dispose of her own wealth is a great check on her husband's inclination to forsake her or to Tyrannize. If she dies without children her entire property returns to her own family unless She makes it over by will to him or you or I or John or Molly which she has equal power to do. This is the reason that one so often hears two Ladies perhaps young pretty foolish & coquettish talking to each other about the sale of Lands, purchase of *Souls* (slaves), 'My husband's Estate, after which we shall go to my Estate where I

<sup>1</sup> M<sup>me</sup>. Scherbenin, Princess Daschkaw's daughter.

intend to make improvements ' &c. &c, then talking of M<sup>me</sup> Such a one's affaires at the Senate being in good or bad train, of her oats, her wheat, her barley &c. being sold to advantage this year, & very frequently of her *Whisky distillery* being insufficient to deffray the expences of her Toilet. . . .

. . . . .

28<sup>th</sup> [August]

" The subject of M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin] is like a Sponge to our existence. We are not capable of doing anything.

29<sup>th</sup> &c. &c.

" By the accident of the Steward's bringing *me* M<sup>me</sup> S's answer to K's Letter everything is come to light, & we have had a dreadful explanation with the Princess. 'tis shocking to think 'tis from *her Daughter* all this Misery arises.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>

" *What a Day* we have had ! *Letters, Conversations, Hysterics, terrors.* Good heaven, what a day of Misery !

. . . . .

Monday [9<sup>th</sup> November. TROITSKO]

" . . . We went one evening last week to look at the men fishing by *torch light*. I never saw anything that appears more dangerous as a pile of wood is set lighting at one end of a small Boat & really I don't know what saves it from catching fire & being consumed. It seems that by the firelight the fishermen *see* the *sleeping fishes* who cluster pretty near the surface of the water & near the Rivers Banks. They have a most diabolical instrument prepared, a long pitch, & on every tooth of the fork (there are 8) is a *barb*. With this fork they peirce the swarming fishes & sometimes bring up 2 three or four. We could not see the slumbering Inhabitants of the water on account of the high wind which prevented our getting near the place & the following day Winter was nearly establish'd so as to prevent torchlight fishing for many months to come. . . . I began yesterday to copy out Kitty's translation of the Princess's History after having finished copying the same thing in French & since that all the Empress Katherine's Letters to Princess Daschkaw.

*Monday* [16<sup>th</sup> November] Moscow!

" We arriv'd yesterday Evening. So Here we are once more in Moscow where so much perplexity distress & sorrow has lately counterballanc'd the moments of Gaiety which its illusions (or my own) have afforded me formerly. Yet upon a calm retrospect of the three years already pass'd in Russia I believe myself *happier* now than I have ever been! & strange to say 'tis Calumny most cruel, most unkindly meant which has effected this! It has acted as a sort of touchstone for various things, & the result is, thank God, happy; besides it serves to give me a power of staying at home to follow more rational pursuits, & much more agreeable ones than Dancing or Yawning in a Genteel Crowd! It has brush'd away a hundred clinging Cobweb Ceremonys, proprietys, teasing nothings. A general change of Apartments has made us more comfortable. In short I feel as if we should spend this Winter to better purpose than any we have yet pass'd in the Capital of the Tzars!

*To HER FATHER*

Moscow. *Sunday* 13<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup>. N.S. 1806

" . . . I am charm'd that the box of odds & ends afforded some amusement. Have you found out that the Curiosity from Tula is a Machine for perfuming the rooms? Charcoal is placed in it & perfumes burn'd which *fume* through the Suites of Apartments as the little machine is whisk'd about sometimes by a bearded Slave but more frequently by a well powder'd Laquay. Its office I suppose will now be to lie quietly on the steel chimney peice, to match which K. is to take over a pair of Steel Candlesticks of Tula Manufacture likewise. As for my Pictures there is certainly some evil Genius presiding over them. I shall make one more attempt in compliance with Rob<sup>t</sup>'s request.<sup>1</sup> At present the Princess is getting me painted with flowing tresses & a Shawl which they say promises to be much more like any of the five already done. Oh then who would have thought it was *my* Countenance which was destined to become a Revenue for the Painters of the Age! Kitty's

<sup>1</sup> Her brother Robert Wilmot (1772-1815), Deputy Recorder of Cork. He married Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. John Chetwood of Glanmire.

is really a treasure, but let no one flatter themselves it is a present for I have written on the back my *title deeds* to which I beg leave to turn the attention of the Public. You know 'tis I who am to make a ganlany of a splendid frame for mine & another for Kitty's.

The Princess is now perfectly well. I think I mention'd lately her having a sort of *Skirvus* form'd on the small of her back. It has discharged itself & disappear'd. For a few days it gave us the most serious uneasiness, but never was anything equal to the pureness of her blood & strength of her Constitution. Her spirits however are bad. Family matters are gone to the utmost bound of disunion, & no power can change or even soften anything. Indeed it is dreadful but as *all* intercourse is at an end we live in comparative tranquility.

Since I came to Moscow my Library is swell'd to a prodigious size by a present which the Princess has made me of the Eccyclopedia bound in 49 Volumes & all of Voltaire's Works, 7 Volumes of M<sup>me</sup> de Sevigné's Letters, & three most interesting Volumes of 'a Description of all the Nations submitted to Russia' full of colour'd Prints of the Costumes of Each.<sup>1</sup> She has likewise given me Milton's Works, three enormous Volumes bound in red morocco full of exquisite prints & such a type! Only wait till you see it! I wish to Goodness all my Books were this moment in the Music Room. They would be a fund of delightful amusement for years. Oh but I forgot that almost all of them are in french.

We are in a great hubbub at present as Government has issued a Ukass to order off all the French in the Empire with restrictions however which will allow some thousands to remain. Never was a Land so overrun with Locusts as this is with french. Will you believe that there is scarcely a House where a Governor for the

<sup>1</sup> *Description De Toutes Les Nations De L'Empire De Russie*, St. Petersburg, 1776-1777. In the fly-leaf of the first volume Princess Daschkaw wrote: "This Book is offered to my Darling Child Mavra Romanovna Wilmot." Underneath this inscription Martha added: "I now offer these volumes to my dear child Catherine Daschkaw Bradford, named after the dear dear Princess. M. Bradford. Storrington. 23rd Nov. 1837." Catherine in turn wrote: "To dear Elizabeth Lecky from her affectionate friend Catherine Anne Daschkaw Brooke (née Bradford). August 1882." Elizabeth Lecky was the wife of W. E. H. Lecky the historian, whose mother, née Isabella Wilmot, was Martha's niece. She presented the volumes to the Royal Irish Academy, in whose library they are now preserved.

Boys & a Governante for the Girls is not to be found of that Nations. Miliners to the amount of some hundreds sell off ends of Gauze &c. &c. at the most exorbitant prices because they pretend they are just arriv'd from Paris, tho' 'tis known half their goods come from Russian Shops at the other end of the Town ; & still they talk & cajole & make fortunes from the pockets of those who allow themselves to be duped & deserve it from their blind devotion to the Magic of the Word *Paris* ! Dancing Masters are of course french, so are multitudes of Physicians. In short Profession & trade of the domestic kind (I mean taylors, Mantua-makers, Miliners, Waiting Maids, Cooks, Booksellers, &c. &c. &c. &c.) swarm with french, & as for Education that of the youth of Russia for a series of years has been *exclusively* in their hands, & well they have prepared their pupils for the Silken Yoke of the World's Tyrant whom the Lord send may be caught at last by the excess of his ambition & frozen in the Land he is now resolv'd to conquer—I mean Russia. For do you know we are just as full of preparations against him here as we ever were in Eng<sup>d</sup>, & more ridiculous storys if possible are fabricated. Certain it is however that Government is quite alive upon the subject, and at length a spirit of Patriotism begins to penetrate the Cloud which has kept it from observation hitherto. A Militia is now forming throughout the Empire for home preservation, Patriotic Sentiments are most loudly applauded in the Theatre, & individual instances of it are no longer rare. . . .

Public events here wear so menacing an aspect that Heaven only knows what may happen between this & K's departure. Should Buonaparte take possession of Poland we shall of course go to Petersbourg. . . .

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> [December]*

“ Every moment teams with alarm, with bustle & preparation. The Choice of Officers for the Command of the Moscow Militia was begun yesterday. The Nobles assembled in the Great ball room, & it seems the Gallery was full of Ladys who went to see the ballotting &c. &c. We are in hopes of going there to-morrow.

*Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>ry</sup> 1807*

"Last Monday Kitty went to the Gallery of the Nobles, on Tuesday I went there. . . . We both have the same story to tell, that is, that we saw a Crowd of Men dress'd in the Uniform of Moscow (Bottle Green turn'd up with Scarlet—Waistcoat & Breeches White) who mov'd about & talk'd together without caring for answers, that we saw 13 tables placed with a Secretary at each for the 13 departments of the Government of Moscow, that Prince Daschkaw as Marshal of the Noblesse was placed at the head of the principal one cover'd with Scarlet Cloath, & that a great Buzz was all that could be heard at the distance we were. The Object of the Assembly was to chuse Officers for the Militia. Admiral Mordvenoff has been chosen as second in command under Gen<sup>l</sup> Tutelman which choice excites great surmise, surprise &c. &c. It seems Adm<sup>l</sup> M. has neither House nor property in the Government of Moscow, nor does he know any of the Nobles. The affair is supposed to be an Intrigue of higher Powers, for great purposes, & so forth.<sup>1</sup>

The time is supposed to be big with events in the interior of the Country as well as the exterior, as 'tis thought that discontent amongst the Peasants is likely to follow the measure of enrolling a Militia. . . . The Princess gives to her Peasants Halberts like those used in Henry the 8<sup>th</sup>s time ; a Hatchet at one Side, a Hook at the other, & a Speer at the top. This three fold weapon is placed on a long pole & looks most tremendous. It is what a number of Persons give instead of Guns, Swords &c. as being more suited to the undisciplin'd Peasants who are to use them. Mem : the price of Guns rose from five to thirty roubles in one

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Semenovich Mordvinov (1754-1845), Russian admiral and politician. As a young naval officer he spent three years in England and returned to Russia full of admiration for the English constitution. He was promoted admiral by the Czar Paul, and in 1802 became Minister of Marine but later resigned in favour of Tchichagov. He was reckoned among the small band of "liberals" led by Speransky whom Alexander I consulted in the early years of his reign. His liberalism was, however, only aimed at benefiting the petty aristocracy and he upheld serfdom in its worst forms. Though never trusted in higher spheres he was popular with all classes ranging from the reactionary nobility to the progressive "decembrists." This explains his election as Assistant Chief of the Moscow Militia, though not a member of the Moscow nobility. He was created a Count by Nicholas I in 1834.

day when the great demand for arms was announc'd, & white feathers for the Officers' Hats from 3 to 25. . . .

*Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> [January]*

" Last night we had company here, but our intended gaiety was most compleatly paralysed by the shocking intelligence that Prince Daschkaw was at the point of Death ! . . . The Princess imagined it was only an invention to surprise her into a reconciliation with her Son and treated it with incredulity ! Unhappily she was too soon convinc'd of the sad reality. She cannot see him now, as he is lying senseless. . . .

*Friday 22<sup>d</sup> Jan<sup>ry</sup> N.S. 1807*

\* " Before time mellows the keen sensation excited by the events of the last dreadful week, let me note down what I should perhaps doubt myself the truth of were it less recent. Prince Daschkaw is no more ! This fatal blow was struck on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> of Jan<sup>ry</sup> N.S. at 4 o'clock in the Morning when he breathed his last. A *billious* fever supposed to arise from disappointed Ambition & other inward causes of distress w<sup>ch</sup> prey'd on his mind had reduced him to a state of insensibility for the 7 last days, during which period we heard sometimes that he was out of all danger, sometimes worse, sometimes better. M<sup>me</sup> de Scherbenin his Sister directed everything & falsehood & confusion were instantly the rules of every action. She suffer'd no one from the Princess his Mother to approach him, not even a Physician, while on the other hand a sort of fatality kept alive in the Princess the most perfect security & a conviction of his being only slightly attack'd. The scene of preparation for imparting to her the dreadful truth exceeds description. Relations assembled in Anna Petrovna's rooms, confusion, different advice given & rejected, drops tears, vehemence on what ought to have been a week before ! *why* such & such advice had not been follow'd ! Then his Character ; began by according him every virtue, & then one by one exchanging them into a *Confession* of almost every vice ! Dr Shlagle & Gen<sup>l</sup> Kissiloff were at length fix'd upon to break it to her ; they did so at about 2 o'clock, & she heard it with a degree of Composure inexplicable !



The House was crowded with relations but the Princess saw only 2 or 3—no hystericks, no faintings. But let me hurry forward, nor dwell on circumstances which I cannot comprehend. Monday was a day of melancholy, but the reception room crowded with company both Morn<sup>g</sup> & Eve<sup>g</sup>, & so it pass'd. Tuesday. Mem : the Shuba, the visit of the Prince's *valet de chambre* (poor creature looking like a Ghost), Conversation of the Princess, &c. &c. &c. And so pass'd Tuesday, our minds harrow'd with contending feelings ! The Prince Daschkaw's idea so fresh upon our minds as a man in the fullest force of health, strength & all the pride of a world he lov'd full well now fell upon our appall'd imaginations with all the chill and terror of a deathbed scene. Religion which alone serves to soften such a moment by aiding one to check selfish regrets & follow a lost friend by anticipation to the immortal resting place, the bosom of the Almighty, flies from the sort of scenes which fill'd this House. All all was terror ; not his death, but his fortune, his debts, his errors, fill'd every mind & form'd their Conversation ; His Sister's conduct too, her affectation & her cruelty towards his Mistress with whom she had liv'd in habits of intimacy for the last 8 fatal months of his Life,—these things repeated here with a thous<sup>d</sup> aggravating circumstances heighten'd the horror of the event without lessening its poignancy. Prince D. had faults & serious ones, but if humanity had a friend it was him. Tender to the feelings & misfortunes of others, I never heard of his refusing to alleviate sickness or misfortune nor to soothe by pity those whom he could not aid. His faults shall not be unveil'd by me. A cruel web of Circumstances estranged him from his Mother. He did not know that She gave him a blessing before his Death (he was so long insensible) & this added another pang of regret.

Wednesday was the Day that the last dutys were to be paid to his cold remains. I woke before Day light, & recalling a hundred unmark'd circumstances of our Acquaintance I recollected likewise what were *his* sentiments on attending the Funeral of a Friend, & I immediately resolv'd to fulfil them. There was but one objection. If chance placed me near M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin] (who hates me), would it be awkward ! That idea gave place instantly to the conviction I felt, that if it were so her Soul would be so absorb'd & her senses in the heartrending Scene before her that

*nothing* could awaken her to any other—but I was mistaken. Accompanied by Anna Petrovna I went to the Church & in an hour after I heard the Chaunt of the Priests & the approach of the dreadful procession. An involuntary movement made me cover my face with my hands. On opening my Eyes on the Scene before me all the pomp of the Greek Church in such ceremonies burst upon my Sight. The Coffin being unclosed, I wish'd to see his face for the last time, & wrap'd up in the sensations so natural to such a scene it must have been something more than common which could arrest my attention & interrupt the feelings of so awful a moment.

M<sup>me</sup> Scherbenin as Chief Mourner stood close by the Coffin, but stood as the Daemon of Revenge, not as the Agoniz'd Sister of a Brother who was but too kind too her. Her Eyes wander'd round the Church & whispers between her & her Companions soon shew'd me that *I* was the object of her enquiry. With me she saw Anna Petrovna. All intercourse between them had been at an end for many Months, but rushing by five or six Ladys who seperated them in a loud & peircing tone of voice She told her that she too had lost a friend & that her Brother had spoken of her the 8<sup>th</sup> day of his illness ('tis certain he was at that time *insensible*) & without stopping she added, 'don't let those English *Monsters* approach him'. In the Greek Church the moment before the Coffin is closed there is a most heartrending & pathetic address by which the state of life & Death is contrasted & everyone is invited to embrace for the last time their Companion & their Brother. This was the Ceremony from which She wish'd to exclude me. As she spoke in Russ & that I paid no attention, I did not know the purport of her words but imagin'd She was in hystericks till A.P. explain'd them; nor could I for a moment comprehend the possibility of a human creature much less a Sister being occupied in such a way at such a moment; but so it was, & that evidently to insult her Mother, for the present moment She has never seen my face tho' I saw hers for I was cover'd with a thick black veil. It seems that She had before address'd herself to the Master of the Police to obtain the same favor from him, but finding he had no power she took the resolution I mention.

This scene (for she made it a public one) changed the tide of my thoughts. Shock'd as I was, I felt that once broken, the

Sentiment which had fill'd my mind could not resume its force, & I felt for the second time that all the Pomp, the preparation, the display, the gaudy Colours, even the exposure of the Dead, is much less congenial to the feelings than the Simplicity of plain black & the consciousness that a Pall Covers the remains of the friend who is no more !

The Princess heard this Circumstance in the Eve<sup>g</sup>. A word drop'd by accident gave her a suspicion that something had happen'd & she insisted on A.P.'s telling her. What accumulation of distress ! But I neither can nor will write down all the particulars of this period of dismay & terror. Suffice it to say that such implacable enmity towards a person who never injured her and whose exertions to produce a reconciliation between the Prince & his Mother were as ardent as mortal could employ leaves an impression of alarm on my mind which will make every day of my life in this Country a day of Unhappiness. On the other hand what's to be done ? Honour urges my stay. Safety urges my departure spur'd on by countless other circumstances. How reconcile all this ? Kitty suffers a million times more than I do, for I don't know what sort of insensibility (or perhaps 'tis a support of heaven) makes me fearless in spite of reason & in the midst of Communications which tend to shew how perfectly devoid of faith honour honesty or anything but vicious propensities & Actions is the great Bulk of this Empire. I do not feel as if I should be abandon'd by the Almighty yet I feel my Courage fainting away whenever the idea of Kitty's departure, which *must* take place in a few Months, comes across my mind. . . .

TO HER BROTHER ROBERT AND HIS WIFE

" Private.

MOSCOW. 2<sup>d</sup> Febr<sup>y</sup> 1807

There is a sort of Cruelty in delaying to write to you, my dearest Robert & Eliza, after the letter which I sent to y<sup>r</sup> private ear on the 20<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>d</sup> of Jan<sup>ry</sup> tho' I feel an untold reluctance to the act of writing because I have very little to add to that despatch. But lest it never arriv'd I will touch on its Contents. In it I announced to the family the Cruel Misfortune which overwhelms this house in the death of Prince Daschkaw. I detail'd the horrible

rites & ceremonies peculiar to the Greek Church in the burial of the Dead. The other whisper'd the unequivocal & increased enmity of M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin] towards me, exhibited publicly in Church the very Day of her Brother's Funeral to which I went from motives which make me on reflection still more satisfied at having done so than I was even by the movement (or instinct) which swayed me at the time. M<sup>me</sup> S's forbidding me to approach the Corps of her Brother to take a last leave (as is the Custom) was an act of *impiety*, an outrage to Religion, an indecency & a mark of implacability against a person who she can never pardon because she has injured me, which in any other Country would have blasted her throughout life. But such is the *cringing* propensity of this heartless Nation & such their falseness that I have reason to believe ~~that~~ those who exclaim most loudly against her to me double back & cry Amen in her presence to every word she utters. Oh no language is literally too weak to paint the depravity of every individual almost who breathes this *chilly* atmosphere. Powers of mind, heart, head feel its benumbing influence, & if you find the wreck of goodness in a person who has pass'd 20 years amongst them, be assured that a *Miracle* has been wrought in that person's favor. But why generalize? Yes, it ought to have this effect, it ought by unfolding to y<sup>r</sup> view a Shadow of the grim truth to shew you on what slippery ground I stand, & that on casting my eyes on the individuals which form my acquaintance they *cannot* rest on one capable of inspiring a moment's Confidence.

One great event has taken place however since I wrote last. Princess D. has made a new Will & excluded M<sup>me</sup> S. from any power over any House, person, or thing belonging to her. She has charged her estates with a Life Annuity for her & left the bulk of her Fortune to the Son of Count Simon Worontzow of London<sup>1</sup> & a young Boy (likewise a Count W.) who is her God-child & to whom she will leave the greater part if he will add the name of Daschkaw to his own.<sup>2</sup> But 'tis thought by some that She cannot disinherit her Daughter! I know nothing about this of course; but 'tis worth a reflection, for were she to inherit there's not a doubt of her Wickedness or of her Malice. She is Sole Heiress to her Brother's debts and wealth except a 7<sup>th</sup> part of his Landed estates & a fourth of his Movable effects w<sup>ch</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 392, note.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 304, note.

together with a 7<sup>th</sup> part of his debts devolve to his unhappy Widow. (If he had had Children they would have inherited what his Sister does, but a Wife's fortune belonging exclusively to her & her heirs, or whoever she pleases, her portion is what I mention unless the Husband makes a Will in her favour.) The Princess who has never seen her Daughter in Law now declares herself her Protectress, & a few days after her son's death wrote to M<sup>me</sup> S. to notify this & to propose some indifferent arrangement relative to his concerns, to illegitimate Children, to the payment of debts & finally to a wish of *Her* quitting Moscow, promising if she comply'd to give her once more a Mother's blessing. M<sup>me</sup> S. refused every article except that concerning the Widow. The P. next threaten'd her that if She did not quit Moscow on a certain Day she would apply to have her put into the House of Correction. This power it seems formerly belong'd to Parents, but the present Emperor has annul'd it & made Children independent of all Controul at 22 whether Married or Single. She was not aware of this, but on hearing it She wrote a note to her daughter upbraiding her with having beat a Servant till the blood gush'd from his Eyes & Mouth (*a fact*) and finally threatening her with a solemn Malediction if she did not quit Moscow & leave her in peace. The circumstance of the Servant was render'd worse by his having often attended the Princess & being a favorite of hers. When M<sup>me</sup> got the Note she desired the Officer who took it to wait. She then read it out, laugh'd at the threaten'd Malediction, sent for the Servant & his Wife, enquired *who* had told the P. of his having been beat by her, & when everyone deny'd (in fact it was told the P. by a M. Posnicoff) She say'd, 'I'll teach you how I treat those who frequent my Mother's house in disobedience to my Commands—Take him to the Police Officers with his Wife'. The miserable creatures were convey'd to the public place of punishment & 'tis a literal fact that *both* were lash'd in a manner that humanity shudders at, & the man's life was despair'd of the Night after. This is a Master's or Mistress's power over their Miserable Slaves.<sup>1</sup> As I write my cheeks are burning & my feet stone cold, but I was resolv'd to give you one

<sup>1</sup> "It seems that any Master or Mistress has the power of sending their Slaves to the Police to be punish'd for *disobedience of orders*, & with that message the Police are oblig'd to act without enquiring into the merits of the Case!"—*Journal of Martha Wilmot*.

unvarnish'd & recent instance of execration which has not depriv'd its accursed perpetrator of a single friend nor of the hackny'd tribute of 'Un Coeur Sensible'. Now judge for y<sup>r</sup>selves of the inferences to be drawn & how widely they extend.

Adieu for a while.

3<sup>d</sup>

" I found it necessary to breathe a little after the above recital, yet be assured that it is not the most atrocious which my polluted memory records. Yet wonderful to say my health preserves itself & my spirits too in a manner scarcely credible. Perhaps this is owing to my affections being absolutely out of the question, my looking upon everyone & everything as *pictures* & myself as subservient to my honour, & to the line of my duty which is unequivocally mark'd. The tortures of doubt or grief are therefore spared me, & not to boast of qualitys which I have not such as Philosophy, Reason, Fortitude & so forth, I feel most devoutly grateful to the Almighty for an elasticity of mind which is not common to . . .<sup>1</sup> mine, & a state of health which sets lowness of spirits, nerves, & the gastly crew of such ills at defiance. Not so K. and one must acknowledge that hers is really the trying situation while mine wears the Laurels. Influenc'd by surrounding circumstances impossible to communicate fully (because they are like the air one breathes, inseperable from one, & form an atmosphere of smoky thick Vapour), She has had a thous<sup>d</sup> conflicts respecting what she ought to do. Reason says she ought to return without me, fear says, ' You ought to insist upon her accompanying you home '. In short what with her nervousness of nature & one thing or the other she is really & truly very ill, & like one *annihilated* internally & incapable of fixing her thoughts on any point of brightness. However since 'tis clear I cannot in honour go *this* year, & equally clear she cannot Stay, we both try to say no more on the subject and consume our lives in proving that there is nothing to say !

I must mention as a gleam of sunshine that Count & Countess Butterline (own Nephew to the P.) have come forward with friendly professions towards me & an offer of their house in case of need.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MS. torn.

<sup>2</sup> Count Dmitri Buturlin (1763-1829), Russian antiquarian and bibliophile. Son of Count Peter Buturlin by his wife, *née* Countess Maria

They are literally the only persons who have *ever* done so amidst troops of flatterers & fawners. As for Anna Petrovna she is a nonentity respecting me, self interested to a notorious degree ; & tho' qualified to speak of every action of my life for nearly four years that we have pass'd together, yet so perfectly absorb'd in jealousy of my favor with the P. & so little capable of a generous movement or a just one, that if she has not spoken ill she certainly has never spoken well of me.

The Princess has order'd in her Will that Coach Horses &c. &c should be given to me. She promises likewise to give me my two attendant Nymphs Arenée & Martishka. She promises to have a Surgeon in the Country without which I declared I would not set my foot in Troitskoe again, & the reason is that in speaking with a Cousin Germain of the P. of our forlorn State & the horrid possibility of the P's sudden death, this lady's reply was, " 'tis very true, & so much the more distressing because there are People wicked enough to suspect *You* of being accessory to such a thing !!! " The Lady who say'd this is Soft and Mild. I mention it to shew *how the wind blows* in their natures, one & all. Oh to be once *well out* of the Empire of all the Russias ! Some cheering sensations tell me I shall, grounded on nothing ; but throughout all these terrors & horrors I can only Say that I have never felt dejected & that under the circumstances which have existed a million of favourable nothings have tended to brighten the gloom

Woronzow, sister of Princess Daschkaw. His grandfather, Count Alexander Buturlin, had been one of the Empress Elizabeth's lovers and subsequently became Field-Marshal and Governor of Moscow. In 1809 Count Dmitri Buturlin was appointed Director of the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg and later raised to the rank of Privy Councillor, Chamberlain and Senator. His vast library was destroyed during the burning of Moscow in 1812, but undaunted by this catastrophe he immediately set to work and collected another of 33,000 volumes. Noted for his musical entertainments, when he was punctilious in closing the doors upon late arrivals. In 1817 his extravagance obliged him to leave Russia for Italy, where he died. Wrote an authoritative account of the French invasion of Russia, which he published. He married his second cousin, Countess Anna Woronzow, daughter of Count Arthème Woronzow. In spite of his extravagance she was devoted to him, and it is recorded that on one occasion, hearing while at a ball that he was about to make a disadvantageous bargain with speculators, she jumped into a carriage in her ball dress and drove over 100 miles, arriving just in time to save her husband. She was a friend of Count Joseph de Maistre, and largely under Jesuit influence she became a convert to the Roman Catholic faith. Her three daughters all married into the Italian nobility.

of reality. The P. is exactly as usual to me nor has this fatal event of her Son's death made any sensible change in anything.

Respecting money I am to send over the last £5000 whenever the exchange rises so as to make the Sum allotted five thousand. & by the by I shall not die a Day the sooner for lightening my mind by saying here that in case of my Death I wish my property to be equally divided amongst my Brothers & Sisters to whatever amount it may be. *En attendant* thanks for all the trouble you take dearest R., & hold y<sup>r</sup> tongue Miss Eliza about the little bread & salt which must be follow'd up by £100 debenture the very moment there is enough to pay it to you both, or we cut all acquaintance.

Adieu. I don't recollect anything else.

Believe me,

Ever & forever y<sup>r</sup> Most Affec<sup>t</sup>

MATTIBUS.

P.S. On my God what I would give to be sitting in y<sup>r</sup> Architectural Smile

One word more to give you another proof of M<sup>me</sup> S. & of what she is capable. The Mistress of P[rince] D[aschkaw] which whom you know she lived openly & call'd her Sister is now turn'd from the House, her Children siez'd by M<sup>me</sup> S. & She denies that they belong to the Woman tho' She has almost seen them born before her Eyes.<sup>1</sup>

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> Febr<sup>y</sup>*

"... There is a Story now in Circulation which *every one* believes, namely that a few nights ago the Guard of the Great Cathedral in the Kremlin being startled by the sound of horses prancing in the Cathedral went to the Church Warden to engage Him to find out what it was. He arriv'd with his Keys, but on applying them to the Lock the Doors of themselves flew open, the Church was suddenly illuminated, & they saw two Warriors in

<sup>1</sup> These children were brought up by Mme. Scherbenin, but though treated harshly by her they do not appear to have received a bad education. The historian Bartenev relates in *Russky Archiv* (1889, at p. 397) how an old correspondent told him that when on a visit to Mme. Scherbenin many years before she noticed in the house "a poor pale little girl maltreated by the servants." This individual turned out to be one of Prince Daschkaw's illegitimate daughters.



full Armour issue forth after having bow'd down before the image of the Virgin of Kazan, who is the Patron of the Church, & made many Signs of the Cross. They then Mounted a Horse which, some say, rose on the Clouds & disappear'd, others that they went off in full galope fleetier than the Wind on this Wonderful Steed. In parting they waved their hands, and declared they were going to aid *their* Countrymen *against the French* and that Buona-parté should fall. Whether any jugglers' tricks have been play'd or on what this Story is founded I know not, but the Church Warden & the Soldier on Guard deposed on Oath before the Governor General of Moscow the above circumstances which may possibly serve to animate the Courage of the Soldiers.

This reminds me that I ought to note down the excessive Superstition & Credulity of the Russians in general. 'tis almost boundless. The lower orders believe *rigidly* in the power & influence of Fairys, Witches, &c. &c. &c. &c. The Higher Orders to a Man to a Woman play *la bonne aventure* on the Cards & are happy or miserable according to the good or bad Omens of the fortune telling Cards. Myriads of Nobles would not Sleep in a room alone, nor remain five minutes in the dark for worlds ; & even in a pretty large Circle of Visitors where Conversation was sufficiently loud to keep the Devil out of the House, we had a few Evenings ago a most comical instance of the inquietude of an old Lady of high blood who towards twilight grew so uneasy on the subject that at length She whisper'd to Anna Petrovna '*I shall certainly faint if candles are not brought ; it has happened to me more than once*'.

[Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February]

"The young Princess Daschkaw arriv'd at Moscow this Morning with Countess Eudoxa Worontzow & M<sup>me</sup> Novoff both of whom were sent by Princess D. to conduct her. She wrote her a Letter by them, the first She ever wrote her in her life, tho' She was married to Prince D. above 20 years ago. The first interview between Princess D. & the poor unhappy Widow, her Daughter-in-law, is over & what a moment is it for them to be reunited ! Tears on both sides, & scarcely a word fill'd up the five Minutes which it lasted, as the Princess left her Daughter-in-law to repose which She wanted so much. For the five or six last years of her life she had resided entirely in the Country, Separated

from her Husband *in the Russian way*, that is keeping different establishments but on very good terms & writing Letters to each other by every Post. Anne Simonovna is the young Princess's name. She is a mild, fearful, I must own simple looking Woman, interesting from her situation more than from her appearance which was pretty. She is not more than 36 tho' she looks above 46. She Cherish'd the idea of her Husband, tho' I suppose his Sentiments towards her were not *very* responsive from the manner of his Life. Her Conduct has always been irreproachable but her *fate* unfortunate. She is now by the Laws entitled to a 7<sup>th</sup> part of her Husband's wealth (Estates & Slaves) & a 7<sup>th</sup> part of his debts fall to her Share. She is likewise entitled to a 4<sup>th</sup> part of his moveable property such as furniture, Plate, & so forth—but of this last M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin] has been selling off a great part, & 'tis thought that the debts are more than the value of the Lands as a thous<sup>d</sup> enormitys are practiced to involve his affairs more & more by Stewards & other Creditors. She had no fortune, & therefore She is now literally penniless. I trust the Princess may make her dependent. In fact she has now no other hope to lean on.

M<sup>me</sup> Poliansky is arriv'd from Petersburg to visit the Princess. She had brought her little child with her, a boy of 18 months old.

*Monday 23<sup>d</sup> [February]*

“ We have been today to look at a Regiment of Bashkirs marching into town. This Savage looking race live on the borders of Siberia, & to a European eye accusom'd to regularity & good order in a Regiment the one we have seen today appears no better than a rabble assembled lord knows how & put to ride upon Cats instead of Horses. However the fact is otherwise. Their party colour'd habilments are compleat in themselves, large & Commodious, across their backs are strung on a leather belt a quiver full of arrows & a Bow ; they have guns, pistols & long pikes which last are fasten'd by a Strap to their right foot & stand erect with very little trouble. Their napsacks are well furnish'd, so are their Saddles w<sup>th</sup> food & furniture, & when they are distress'd for the former they eat Horses flesh with great joy. There is nothing characteristic in their faces which varied essentially from each other, being long, short, broad, narrow, flat, rais'd, brown, *very brown*, orange & tawny alternately. The Reg<sup>t</sup> consisted of 1047

men. It was divided into companys, & at the beginning of each company rode a fear inspiring band of musicians who yell'd horrible dittys in most doleful tones with smiling countenances & great self complacence. They had no instruments of music. Their Caps were Warm & of different forms & colours, some sugar loaf shape, others round, others square, but all lined with fur, cover'd with velvet old or new & hanging low on their Ears ; their Horses very small but strong & infatiguable. The Princess spoke to one of them & beg'd him to send Buonaparte to Moscow a Prisoner. The Soldier reply'd with great seeming pride, ' Only let us once get near him, & never fear the rest '. Their Officers differ'd in dress from the Soldiers & the general dress of all appear'd much like old dressing gowns.

After passing this reg<sup>t</sup> of Bashkirs we proceeded to a short distance from the Twerstkoï Barrier whence the Princess had appointed a few Cossacks to repair in order to shew us their exercise which is very curious. Unfortunately the deep snow prevented the possibility of their shewing more than 2 or 3 manœuvres. Their yell upon attacking the Enemy, their Manner of taking a Prisoner & carrying him between two (standing with a foot in the stirrup of each Horse) & riding with him full galope in that position, their power of standing on their Horses & riding full speed in that way having a power of seeing farther & taking better aim against the Enemy, were the only parts of their exercises they could perform.<sup>1</sup> In summer amongst other things they sink under their Horses when they see the Enemy preparing to take aim & start up in an instant after when the danger is over. We saw a Reg<sup>t</sup> of Cossacks marching into Moscow a few days ago, & I never saw a finer looking set of men in all my life, nor a better dress'd. The subject of Dress is of particular consequence here as the regular Troops are laced *so tight* that they can scarcely breath while the lightness of their Cloathing is dreadful for the Climate. The Cossacks' large trowsers & jacket of thick dark blue Cloath is so commodious & so compact that 'tis a comfort to see them. Their pistols in their saddles & all their accoutrements are in the most perfect order.

It was from Gen<sup>l</sup> Kissiloff's Windows we saw them pass by, &

<sup>1</sup> Under the command of the distinguished General Platoff. See above, p. xx.

a slight specimen of Russian manners appear'd in the person of Gen<sup>l</sup> Kissiloff's Mistress, a french Woman who was in the room all the time & with whom the young & pretty little M<sup>lle</sup> Bavanoff, who is really well manner'd & highly accomplish'd appear'd to be in habits of intimacy in the presence of M<sup>me</sup> Bavanoff who convers'd with her a great deal herself. M<sup>lle</sup> Kissiloff with whom we were conversed with her likewise. In short she appear'd very nearly as Mistress of the House, & very nearly did the honours as such !!! We have been inundated lately with subjects of this nature. Such a mingle of pride & meanness as is the Russian Character! Well I will not write what I think & what I know of it.

. . . . .

8<sup>th</sup> of April 1807

" . . . Lord Somerton <sup>1</sup> & Mr Adlercron <sup>2</sup> have been introduced here & visited us last Sunday. The latter is returning immediately to Ireland after having travel'd a great deal & pass'd some months at Constantinople. His Uniform is scarlet faced I think with purple, but I don't know in what reg<sup>t</sup> he is. L<sup>d</sup> S. seems inclined to travel farther into Russia, & tho' Irish & son to the Archbishop of Dublin he knows but little of his country & is very little curious to know more.

M<sup>me</sup> Poliansky is gone & M<sup>me</sup> la Baronne Hogére is arriv'd. These amiable Nieces of the Princess scarcely affect to disguise the egregiously mercenary motives which have brought them out of pure love to the P. They are Sisters in Law, & each has try'd to blacken the character of the other without mercy. What a Nation it is ! As *Prime Minister* I come in for the grossest flattery, the most unqualified that ever was utter'd, everyone is ready to unveil to me the treachery of her Neighbour & the hollowness of all professions but hers or His who speaks last. In short 'tis such a burlesque caricature of all I *ever* heard or read respecting Courts that I am lost in admiration & know not where to find language strong enough to give appropriate epithets to all their meanness filth & depravity.

<sup>1</sup> Welbore Ellis (Agar), Viscount Somerton, later 2nd Earl of Normanton (1778-1868). He married in 1816 the Hon. Diana Herbert, only daughter of George, 11th Earl of Pembroke by his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Topham Beauclerk. His wife's step-mother, whom Lord Pembroke married as his second wife in 1808, was Catherine, only daughter of Count Simon Woronzow, late Russian Ambassador in London and brother of Princess Daschkaw.

New storys too are come to light about M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin] who has been plotting with *Sorcerers* the destruction of her Mother, Sister in Law, & me. A powerful Charm was to have bewitch'd us, alienated our reason or kill'd us. This has blown over Lord knows how without almost any enquiry.

Princess Mary Cherbatoff<sup>1</sup> has been here telling her grievance & talking of affairs. Her Mother left her great wealth by will & wish'd to disinherit her son who married against her consent. The young Princess resolv'd to share it with her Brother. He refuses & claims the Entire. Princess Mary is gone to St Petersburg for Justice. So everlasting discord is likely to be the portion bequeathed to poor Princess Mary, for most people think it will be decided against her. What a Scandal for her Mother to have listen'd *only* to her passions & without being sure of her power to leave such a cruel inheritance to her Daughter with *a curse* if she ever gave to her Brother a considerable Estate where she is buried & which is the one he claims as his birthright.

16<sup>th</sup> [April]

" . . . The young Princess Daschkaw pleases me more & more every Day. We see her constantly as she spends every Eve<sup>g</sup> here. She unfolds so many amiable qualitys & has so much unobtrusive firmness that she surprises me most agreeably. . . .

Wednesday [21<sup>st</sup> April]

" Went to the Cathedral in the Kremlin to see the Kitchen where the Priests dress the Holy oyl. We saw two great Cauldrons fill'd with oyle into which was thrown (with Signs of the Cross) all sorts of spices & odoriferous herbs. After three days looking & muttering over these enchanted cauldrons the long bearded Priests pour it into vessels prepared for the purpose. Paul 1<sup>st</sup> made a donation of 16 large Silver Urns which we saw as well as a great display of other Vessels of Silver, & to crown all on the top of the Stage erected for the *Massey* display was a small Mother of pearl vase said to contain a drop of the oyle with which the Woman (7<sup>th</sup> chapter St Luke) anointed our Saviour's feet.

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Princess Theodor Scherbatoff. At this time she was in the midst of a love affair with the English painter Sir Robert Porter, whom she subsequently married. See below, pp. 333-334.

[Easter] Monday 26<sup>th</sup> [April]

"... I was very wrong to omit mentioning Lord Royston who has been here once & who is a very charming Young Man by all accounts.<sup>1</sup> His appearance is so like a Newfoundland Dog's Cub that there's no denying the resemblance, and he gives one the impression of all sorts of brave fearless upright honest qualities. He is the son of Ld Hardwicke Lord Leiut<sup>t</sup> of Ireland. He has already visited several countrys & learns languages with peculiar advantage. He has translated I forget which *Greek* author, but is of so modest a nature that he gives one more the idea of a playful boy than a cleaver & learned Man. He made but a very short stay here, & I have heard him praised by the few who were capable of flattering by perceiving his style of character. L<sup>d</sup> Sommerton is thought more *amiable*. With L<sup>d</sup> Royston we saw M<sup>r</sup> Pointzett<sup>2</sup> who Kitty was acquainted with in France. 2 Countess Worontzows have likewise been here & are gone again.<sup>3</sup> They are sisters to Countess Buttourline & Demoiselles d'honneur; they are very *hawty tawty* & loud & like all the newly arriv'd from Petersbourg give themselves great airs with the Moscovites. Lord Douglas is now English Ambassador at Petersburg.<sup>4</sup> He is not much admired either by the English or Russians & both partys unite in abusing him for affecting foreign manners. He is quite Italianiz'd. L<sup>d</sup> Gower was more admired a thousand times to be sure. Amongst other things L<sup>d</sup> G. is a beautiful Creature, & L<sup>d</sup> D. very much otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Philip (Yorke), Viscount Royston (1784-1808), M.P. for Reigate. Eldest son of Philip, 3rd Earl of Hardwicke. The shipwreck in which he was drowned off Lübeck in 1808 is described below, pp. 339-343.

<sup>2</sup> Joel Poinsett (1779-1851), American author and politician.

<sup>3</sup> Countess Catherine (1780-1836) and Prascovie (1786-1842) Woronzow. Daughters of Princess Daschkaw's first cousin Count Arthème Woronzow by his wife Prascovie, daughter of M. Theodor Kvachine-Samarine. The elder died unmarried and the younger married M. Alexander Timofief, a banker of Tamboff. Their sister Anna was married to Count Dmitri Buturlin, Director of the Hermitage and Princess Daschkaw's nephew.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander (Hamilton), Marquess of Douglas and Clydesdale (1767-1852), later 10th Duke of Hamilton. In St Petersburg he fell in love with Countess Potocka, described in Lord Malmesbury's *Diaries* as "an old battered beauty" whom he followed into Poland on the severance of diplomatic relations between Russia and England. A great connoisseur of books, mss. and paintings. His collection realized nearly half a million sterling on his death.

*Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May*

“... The Conversation of the day turns on M<sup>r</sup> Chashnicoff accused of forgery. Formerly he possess’d only 20 Slaves for all his substance & a few acres of Land. At present & for many years his Establishment has been quite royal, & as he has had neither trade nor manufactures (w<sup>ch</sup> I was formerly assured he *had* had) nobody can account otherwise for his great wealth. Horrors have been brought to light by this enquiry in which Government is now very active. ’tis even say’d that after having employ’d 40 persons to fabricate the papers for the notes in a subterraneous cavern in his garden & lull’d them to Security by promises of Sharing the profits, he recompenc’d them on the last day of their labour by rolling a tremendous Stone over the opening while they were all assembled, since which day not one of the unfortunate Victims has ever been heard of. During the course of the work some of them had confided to their Wives the Great Gentlemen & Ladys they were promis’d by M<sup>r</sup> C. to be made, & so the affair transpired, but it is still only whisper’d tho’ pass’d many & many years. However it is only the 1<sup>st</sup> week of lent that he is say’d to have poison’d a M<sup>r</sup> Worontzow, a distant relation of P[rincess] D[aschkaw] in a cup of Chocolet. This poor Man had borrow’d from him a sum of money, & finding several false notes amongst the papers he told him so. Chashnicoff desired him to call on Him the next Morn<sup>g</sup> & arriving early he was invited to drink Chocolet, did so, & drop’d down dead in a few minutes after. The Corps was look’d at by one or 2 Physicians (whose verdicts are suppos’d to have been bribed ones), & exposed in a Church for 3 Days, but no notice was taken except in mysterious whispers that the dead Man’s cheeks continued flush’d & Water to ouze from his Eyes ; Saliva was likewise in his Mouth—all signs of a violent death. The explication of all this forbearance is that Chashnicoff is befriended by the G[overnor] G[eneral] of M[oscow] (T[utelman] ) to whom he has lent considerable sums & likewise paid his & his sons’ debts in these same false assignats. Indeed the degree of vice and the universal corruption which we hear fresh instances of every Day is enough to make one tremble.

A Lady of high birth & consideration whose manners are very insinuating engaged lately the wife of an English Physician (who had seperated herself from her husband for some family disagree-

ment) to be Governess to her Children. M<sup>rs</sup> T. accompanied her to a Provincial Town of which the Lady's Husband was Governor. In a few days all masks were thrown aside which had been kept on till M<sup>rs</sup> T. had unpack'd her Trunks & given or lent the Lady half her wardrobe. From the moment She had done so She was treated with as much contempt & impertinence as She had before receiv'd respect & kindness. I cannot enter into all the details of damp, bad room fill'd generally with Servants or Spys, of not being suffer'd to walk for her health, of unwholesome food, &c. &c. &c. which led her very soon to tell the Lady it would be impossible for her to remain with her. She was laugh'd at & told she would find it *rather* difficult to get away, as without the Governor's permission nobody could quit the town & *that* she was resolv'd she should never receive. In the meantime she neither receiv'd nor could she send a letter, she became a compleat Prisoner, her health was so affected that she began to grow Consumptive & to spit blood. One day she watch'd a favorable moment, got out of a window & after incredible difficultys arriv'd at a neighbouring town where by good luck She had a friend to whom she went, but before she had well time to tell her story the Governor's Carriage arriv'd to take her back by force. She resisted, but her friend, an Englishman, well knowing what *power* was, recommended her to do so, promised faithfully to send the Letter she had brought ready written to Moscow, & to follow it up by her rescue. In a few days a person arriv'd from Moscow in consequence of her letter, & he having the ear of higher persons at Petersburg the Governor & his Lady began to change their tone after making several struggles & trying to frighten her into staying in secret. After various scenes she was at length permitted to go, & then the Lady beg'd they might part *friends*. M<sup>rs</sup> T. ask'd for the Clothes she had borrow'd from her, & the price of some peices of muslin she had bought. The Lady with infinite mildness and sweetness assured her she had rec'd all as present from her, & in a word M<sup>rs</sup> T. with half her Constitution & half her Wardrobe was very happy to make her escape & make no further effort !! One circumstance I have omitted which was her feeling a conviction that when matters had gone so far they had meditated her death, & one night she heard a noise of someone walking on tiptoe who, when her crys brought light & other persons into the



room, prov'd to be a Slave who pretended to be searching for another Slave. As if he was likely to find him there. This is by no means a singular instance by what I understand !

Respecting Morals there is a good Specimen in the next Street to us. A Prince Zenovia, into whose yard we look from our Windows, has Let a wing of his House as a Brothel & lives *with his family* in the remainder of his Palace !!!

*Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May*

“ Madame de Narishkin’s and Gen<sup>l</sup> Kochetoff’s deaths have happen’d within this week & compleatly set adrift on the Wide World the Daughters of each House. *As usual* the debts & disorder of the Parents have left their Children in the utmost confusion & helplessness. The question is, who will take the orphans? The 2 M<sup>lle</sup> Narishkins are to live at Count Butterlin’s, the eldest M<sup>lle</sup> Kotchetoff (as Demoiselle d’honneur) is provided for, that is, she lives at Court, she had £300 a year to live, & if she marrys she is to have £1500. The 2 other Sisters are to come here. . . .

*Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June*

“ Kitty’s approaching departure occupies all our thoughts. I have had a severe disappointment in not at least accompanying her to Riga or Petersbourg with the Princess as it was arranged, but it was impossible on account of affairs for the young P. & still more from the Princess’s feeble state of health & threatening of a Dropsy.

Moscow. *July 11<sup>th</sup> 1807. N.S. Sunday*

“ Last Sunday the Princess, Princess Anne Simonovna her Daughter in law, Anna Petrovna Islainoff and I set out to accompany Kitty part of her Journey towards St Petersburg. . . . At length we arriv’d at Klin 92 versts from Moscow, took some bread & wine & retired Kitty & I to her Calash, A.P. to the Coach, the Princess to her travelling bed & her Daughter in law to a Sopha where she got no sleep. ’tis much the wisest place to

sleep in one's Carriage in this Country for the Inns are almost all peasants' Houses & deplorable. The following Morning Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July my dearest Kitty quitted us. She & her Maid Ellen got into the Calash follow'd by Ivan Alexandrovitch the Princess's faithful Officer of Police & two Laquays in a Kibitkee, and having settled the plan with the Princess she drove from the door full gallop without taking leave of any of us except the Princess whose affection wish'd to spare me the painful sensation of taking leave. This was however *less* necessary than it might have been a week ago or even two days, as my return to Ireland next Spring to pass one year at least amongst my friends is now openly spoken of and has been arranged within that period by the arrival of letters from my Father and Mother to the P. This perspective exhilarates me to such a degree & Kitty still more, that it has spared us both the misery of separation which would have been render'd doubly painful under the circumstances which exist for me respecting the avow'd enmity & jealousy of M<sup>me</sup> de S[cherbenin].

Anna Petrovna & I sat in the little garden of the Inn at the end of which runs the river call'd *Sestra* (the russ for Sisters) for a couple of hours. We were then call'd to Dinner & before it was well finish'd *Green Spectacle* Voloieff the Nephew of M<sup>r</sup> V. drove up on his return from Petersbourg, Riga &c. His news of the army is not very brilliant, there appear to be projects of peace with the French. At about 5 o'clock we proceeded towards Moscow. A torrent of rain fell which clear'd the air & reliev'd us from the excessive heat we had endured. We slept A.P. in one Coach & I in the other. On Wednesday we continued our journey and arriv'd at Moscow just as the Boulevards were Crowded with Company. The House appears dreadfully desolate without my sister. My poor little Dog Themise too is very ill. She has got the Pest & is very weak. She has been order'd by a Doctoress to have *Vinager* sprinkled all over her head & squirted into her Mouth & Eyes. I have since got a famous Dog Doctor. He had forbidden Meat and everything except bread, milk & Water. The *Vinager* proceedings are repeated several times a Day, & she is order'd to take exercise particularly in some place where there is long grass to be found. I have taken her to Count Butourline's Garden. There I met young Narishkin who is just return'd from the Army where he says 4 English Officers fought with the Russians against

the French—Gen<sup>l</sup> Hutchinson,<sup>1</sup> his brother Col<sup>l</sup> H. (who he spoke of in *high* admiration), a Col<sup>l</sup> Wilson<sup>2</sup> and I forget the name of the 4<sup>th</sup>. Young M<sup>r</sup> Narishkin is going to see his sisters for the first time after their Mother's Death, he declares he would rather encounter the Enemy in Battle than undergo the first interview with his Sisters. He is marvellously improv'd in his appearance. I'm told he is '*un fort aimable Bouffon*'. It seems that his Character has distinguish'd a great many of the name & is a letter of recommendation for all.

I have written letters, but cannot settle myself yet to better Occupation.

*Monday 18<sup>th</sup> [July]*

" Last Week we pass'd likewise without much serious occupation. . . .

I took Themise one Eve<sup>g</sup> to exercise at the Ponds when I knew all the World was gone to the Boulevards. I was attended by Timothée, my maid Areena (so large & handsome) & took the little Mashinka. I had a proof of the Curiosity I excite however, and at the same time one of the perfect want of good breeding of the Moscovites. Two Ladys siez'd with a wish to be certain of what they suspected, namely that I was the Wonderful English Lady so much beloved by Princess Daschkaw, flounced down on the bench where I had seated myself to repose a little. As there were a great number of other benches & scarcely a human being there to occupy them it was evidently impertinence on their parts as they quitted another seat to come share mine. I therefore rose and without paying any attention to some deplorable sounds of

<sup>1</sup> John (Hely-Hutchinson), Lord Hutchinson, later 2nd Earl of Donoughmore (1757-1832), Irish general. Captured Alexandria at the head of a British force in 1801 and expelled the French from Egypt. Was sent on an unsuccessful mission to the Russian Court in 1806 and was with the Russian army in the field during the campaign ending with the disastrous battle of Friedland early in 1807.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Robert Wilson (1777-1849), soldier and author. Fought with Hutchinson at Alexandria and later served on his staff. Sent by Canning on a confidential mission to Russia, whence his timely information resulted in the interception of the Russian fleet by Sir Sydney Smith. Published accounts of his travels and campaigns and other works particularly of military interest. In 1807 he was imprudent enough to introduce an English pamphlet condemning the Franco-Russian alliance in which he spoke with some disrespect of the Czar, and for this he was obliged to leave Russia.

broken English which they utter'd to each other I march'd away follow'd by the Dog, the Child, the Maid & the Man (all my *Prechett* which is a vulgar expression in russ to distinguish the mob of Church Dignitys that follows a bishop down to the Chanters who generally are a worthless race). After walking sufficiently we got into the Coach and there my Maid told me that the ladys had probably a great wish to make my acquaintance as when I quitted the bench they had made signs to her, call'd her by the tenderest epithets such as *Galouboushka* (little Dove), *Meloi* (dear), *Milinkoi* (my little darling), according to the russian custom of caressing one moment the Slaves they beat the next, and all this to find out who I was ; but Arena who perhaps felt an undefined sensation of their rudeness answered *Ne Snaio* (I don't know). Her sensation was perfectly felt & understood by that wonderful child Mashinka who added ' Mavra Romanovna, I was going to tell those Ladys that it was *not polite* to force themselves into Strange Company, but I thought afterwards I was too young to teach big & Noble persons '. These big & Noble Persons had likewise call'd Mashinka & try'd to decoy her by signs, but she made repeated Coquettish Curtseys which she calls Paris fashion, waved her little hand, bid them adieu & ran over to me. Even Themise, my little Dog did not escape, but as if it had been pre-arranged she too growl'd & ran away, & an empty bench was all that remain'd to console my fulsy Dames.

Another Eve<sup>s</sup> I accompanied Princess Anne Daschkaw, M<sup>me</sup> de Masloff and Anna Petrovna to the University to hear 2 lectures & see the distribution of prizes to the Young Men. These prizes were swords & medals. The Governor General M. de Tutelman (Timothée Ivanovitch) gave great offence that Eve<sup>s</sup> by delaying to come till much beyond the time appointed.<sup>1</sup> This is a constant practice of his. He is here much what a Lord Lieutenant is in Ireland. His House is the one set apart by Government for the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup>, his Establishment is at the Emperour's Expence,

<sup>1</sup> General Timothée Tutolmin (1740-1809), Russian soldier and administrator. Formerly Governor of Tver, Archangel, South Russia, Minsk, and Podolia. Disgraced by Paul I and imprisoned for eighteen months. In 1806 he was appointed Governor of Moscow by Alexander I. Noted for his work of preserving archives and promoting education in the governments which he administered. He married Elizabeth, daughter of M. Michael Arsenieff.

his power nearly unlimited, that is where Government is despotic. There may be 1000 petty Tyrants but they *all* depend *totally* on the Will of the Sovereign, which generally is the will of the favorite, which generally is the pleasure of a Mistress, which is—Oh it might make a very curious chain of dependencies. The Governor General is changed according to the pleasure of the Emperour. It is a situation of great difficulty as there is a kind of rivalry between St Petersburg & the proud Boyers of Moscow who do not forget that Moscow was once the Capital of the Russian Empire. This is felt at Court & few Sovereigns have ever come with any real pleasure to pass even a few Months at Moscow, which on the other hand is jealous that the City has so few Charms for Imperial tastes.

Every description of Society that I have ever seen here has been the faithful Miniature of a Court. I am myself *Prime Minister* of one of the greatest in Moscow. Princess Daschkaw is above the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> everywhere except here where he holds his Office. In the beginning of my *Ministry* before I understood these State affairs I was often offer'd bribes like my brethern Czartorisky, Novosiltzoff, Kotschubei, Romanzoff<sup>1</sup> &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. in the guise of proffer'd friendship, Music, lace, boxes, even sweetmeats & Wine. I swallow'd the first like a Dupe & laugh'd at all the rest. However if it so happen'd that the Princess did not grant the suit of whoever had been paying me Court I (justly!) bore the blame. Within a year my Eyes have been more than ever open'd, but that avails me nothing. Princess D. has had a quarrel with the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> who used to flatter me peculiarly, to repeat my *bons mots*, to say my observations were so *just* that they were formidable, to place me next him at table, to kiss my hand! The first time I met him after the circumstance I scarcely knew anything had happen'd & at the time it only amounted to a Coolness. However he at once changed his manner & did me the honour to revenge on me what he probably felt against the P. This is the most striking instance I can give you because it is the *highest* in rank, but in the various gradations of Society I have experienc'd the same thing about one hundred times, & tho' 'tis very well to laugh at & will probably divert me one day when I read it here as a thing long pass'd, yet it influences

<sup>1</sup> Four of the principal ministers of Alexander I at this time.

my feelings so much at present that I hate going into Public. 'tis this Prime Ministry which caused M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin]'s enmity & all my unhappiness on that subject & the best of it is that no power on Earth could ever make me anything but the most harmless of human beings from not possessing the Genius of intrigue nor the Wish to influence anything beyond a quiet routine & my own limited pursuits in domestic life. Freedom in those is *all* my Ambition, but M<sup>me</sup> S. for example whose passion is to influence & to govern would not believe *that* possible, were it told her by the Angel Gabriel. This Nation imbibes intrigue, ideas of court-ing favour, avoiding disgrace and the extremes of power & dependence with the air they breathe. 'tis natural & it must be so from existing things. They hold a middle post between the exercise of nearly unlimited power over their Slaves, & the Consciousness of almost total dependence on a higher power. If a Man does not serve to obtain a rank, he may possess Millions but he will not have it in his power to put 4 Horses to his Carriage. Consequently every Father instructs his Son to court the great for preferment, since 'tis clear that serve he must not for Patriotism but for rank.

I walk'd on Tuesday Eve<sup>s</sup> round the ponds. It was a public Eve<sup>s</sup>, there was a great assemblage of *Beau Monde* & Music. I went accompanied by M<sup>me</sup> de Masloff and young M. de Yellagin, an officer *gentlemanlikish*. The illness of my poor little Dog renders me good for nothing. 'tis shocking to hear the sufferings of a creature who cannot explain its wishes or wants & who moans continually.

On Saturday the 16<sup>th</sup> arriv'd the news of Peace between the Russians & French. This Peace is very unpopular. However M. de Tutelman has given orders that it should be celebrated magnificently and Sunday there was an illumination, ringing of all the bells till my ears ached, firing of Cannon, a Tedeum, and Buonaparte named Emperour & King instead of Buonaparte in all the Churches. A M<sup>r</sup> Bentham<sup>1</sup> call'd here on Saturday. He is an Englishman, was in the Russian service during Catherine's reign & Potempkin's power. I don't know why he is come back after

<sup>1</sup> Sir Samuel Bentham (1757-1831), naval architect and engineer; younger brother of Jeremy Bentham, the famous jurist and political scientist. He first visited Russia in 1780, where he remained for eleven years, during which period he fitted out a fleet against the Turks and commanded the expedition which sailed from Cherson in 1787 and

an absence of 16 years. It seems he has publish'd a book on the Laws & that he has a brother in London who is continually writing on the same subject & Morals. . . .

I have had a visit from M<sup>rs</sup> Halliday who tells me the English are universally blamed in this town by the Russians for not having sent troops to protect Dantzik & Konigsberg from falling into the power of the French. Perhaps they may have some reason. I never see a Newspaper & know *nothing* absolutely. However not content with blaming their delay on that affair, they have had the absurdity to say that the war has been to *please the English* who have ended by betraying them. This is to throw from themselves all blame of having lost the late battle (fought near Freidland) and made an unpopular Peace at a Moment when even the Turks had cut off the head of their Emperour, Changed their Government & that the politics of the Ottoman Porte would have favor'd Russia & Eng<sup>d</sup> and according to all human Calculation destroy'd Buona-parte's terrific power. The Russians shut their eyes to the strides that little Hero (for he is one tho' I wish him 100 fathom under ground & laid at peace) is making. Prussia is now in his power, & what remains? A *Span* in comparison with what he has already overcome, & that in the Country of the Poles who are in their hearts the bitterest Enemy's the russians have. Can the protection of themselves from such danger be call'd a War made to please England? But this may come home to *individuals*. There are moments when these ideas make me shudder. A War with Eng<sup>d</sup> might be the result, then adieu all hope of even receiving letters, and *how* to return next Spring! But I am in a brave humour to-day & fear nothing.

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July N.S.

"We have gone twice to look at the illuminations which are deplorable. The greatest number of houses have merely a few lamps placed outside the gates of their Court Yard & scarcely any are better. The Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> has a transparency opposite

later held an administrative appointment in Siberia. On his return to England he was employed by the Admiralty as Inspector-General of Naval Works, introducing much needed reforms in the dockyards. In 1805 he again visited St Petersburg to arrange for the building of several ships on behalf of the English Government. A considerable number of interesting letters and papers written by him during his visits to Russia are preserved in the British Museum.

his Windows with emblematic figures, & by the by 'tis worth remarking here that the Manner of illumination here is not like ours within the Houses endangering them but outside ; 'tis not a quarter so dirty to be sure, nor do they seem to have the Spirit of public rejoicing which we have. I recollect at Count Solticoff's Wedding, or rather the ball he gave after it, his House was illuminated in the same way, tho' it was in the depth of Winter.

Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff, the Princess's favorite Nephew who follow'd her into Exile, is arriv'd from the Army.<sup>1</sup> He has a Star & order given him by the King of Prussia at the battle near Dantzik (3<sup>d</sup> May 1800) when the Russians fought for him. He has a great many small orders of Merit given him by the Emperour Alexander and a sword on the hilt of which is inscrib'd ' For Courage ' (За Храбрость). It is ornamented by a large diamond on the top & another at the joining of the handle. He was our Beau yesterday Eve<sup>s</sup> when Anna Petrovna and I went to look at the illuminations on the Boulevards. They were Crowded with Company, but the illumination was deplorable, & we Ladys may as well confess that it was our Military Beau who attracted every eye cover'd with his Marks of honour & glory. This was right & natural, but as every-one is his own Kingdom & Center of attraction I may as well ' come out ' with all the truth & own that it rejoic'd me for another reason. I had consented to drive by the Boulevard in the Carriage & was afterwards induced to walk to avoid disobliging Anna P. But I should have greatly disliked being seen as English, and therefore I took care to cover my face in my Straw bonnet, so that altogether aided by the dull illumination I don't think Mortal saw me. Every One becomes of a certain degree of consequence as the representative of his Nation in a foreign one. If this is agreeable sometimes which it certainly is, it is often very much the reverse ; and it sounds as ludicrous and incredible as it is true that King George & his two parliaments are sometimes brought to me to *answer* for their proceedings (for which I am made responsible) with as much gravity as if the thing was not absurd. National pride should place a barrier to prevent those who disgrace their own Country from Shewing their follies or vices or meanness to

<sup>1</sup> See *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, i, 392-394 ; ii, 3-14. Loptoff's courage aroused the admiration of the Czar Paul, who gave him the command of a regiment and presented him with the Cross of the Order of Malta.



any other. The Effect must be seen to be comprehended entirely, but if simple individuals influence what care should be taken in the Choice of Diplomatic Characters!

The entire conversation of the present moment is the Peace. The Emperour sent Prince Basil Dolgorouky (the young Man who Prince Daschkaw patroniz'd) to announce the event to the Town of Moscow thro' the Gov<sup>r</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup> & thro' the Senate.<sup>1</sup> M. Tutelman it seems has order'd the Merchants (that is the Shopkeepers) to prepare a present of 2000 Duckets for the Messenger of such glad tydings & to purchase for him a gold snuffbox enrich'd with Diamonds. This last belongs to M. Tutelman, & they say he takes the opportunity of selling it to advantage. The peace is, it seems, a very unpopular Measure, & the recompensing a messenger in that manner is unprecedented; 'tis a measure of M. T. himself & gives great discontent. Another is his intention of sending back Prince Dolgorouky to thank the E[mperor] for condescending to communicate the News to Moscow! So that the State of Warfare in which the World is, from Empires to Kingdoms, to Provinces, to Towns, to familys, to individuals, makes of Europe one great Convulsion from which no atom can escape.

In the late battle near Friedland 'tis well known that the Russians were often in a pityable State for want of provisions & ammunition. In the service there is a Corps apart from these two essential things. The latter is in the Artillery branch. The former is divided into two branches the *Provisiansky* depôt is confided to officers of the highest distinction who have others under them from the Gen<sup>l</sup> to the Ensign and a uniform apart. Their duty is to provide all sorts of Food, to have provision made in the neighbourhood of war so as to facilitate its transport in case of emergency. The other call'd *Commissariat* is just in the same style but providing Clothing for the troops in their affair. The Emperour since his return from the Army has publish'd a Ukase to deprive *all* these officers of their Uniforms till the guilty are brought to punishment.

One of our Moscow Storys is that at the interview which took place between the Emperours A[lexander] & B[uonaparte] Napoleon told the Russian Monarch that he had brib'd almost all his

<sup>1</sup> Prince Basil Dolgorouky (1787-1858), Privy Councillor, son of General Prince Basil Dolgorouky and his wife Catherine, daughter of Prince Theodor Bariatinsky.

Majesty's Ministers & that he could & would name to him their prices. To shew his love he added that *his* Duckets were to be found in the pockets of his Majesty's Soldiers even & in a word prov'd that his influence in the Army was unbounded. I don't think this probable but the *lies* of the moment shew the nature of the times as well as the *truths* & are therefore worth notice.

*Monday 25<sup>th</sup> [July]*

"... I have read Katherine 2<sup>d</sup>'s instructions for the Commission appointed to direct a new Code of Laws. The Princess has given me the book which I have read with great pleasure on account of its Celebrity. It strikes me as being written by a person who fear'd to give free scope to their ideas, & tho' every line breathes humanity yet she turns the attention of her readers to those Governments which have been celebrated for cruelty & tyranny to serve as a foil for the humane & just sentiments by which such quotations are follow'd. In fact it was a delicate matter to give laws and retain unlimited power, but Kath. 2<sup>d</sup> was a clever Woman & knew how far to play into Character & where to stop. . . .

*Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> [July]*

"My poor Thèmise is at peace. She died this Morn<sup>g</sup>, and good kindhearted Areena went herself with 2 men to a Wood where she was buried. I am grieved to the heart for her but glad that her Suffering is at an end. . . .

*Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> [July]*

"... I have accepted from the Princess a little Dog, one of Fiddle's, & called him 'Lubeznoi' (the russ for lovely & engaging).  
 . . . . .

*Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"Countess Irena Worontzow and her Son are arriv'd. The Countess appears to be a fashionable Woman. She is not pretty. Her Son, the Young Count, is a youth of 16 with the sweetest expression of Countenance & almost the most beautiful black eyes I ever beheld. He is to take the name of Daschkaw in addition to his own, but his Mother refuses to accept any part of the Princess's

fortune.<sup>1</sup> She says she has an annual income of 100,000 roubles (which is at a very low calculation £12,000 a year, but here it may be valued, taking into Calculation the different value of things & particularly servants & labour which to Russian Landholders is a mere trifle, at £20,000). This she has the good sense to be contented with & her Son still more resolutely ; and so the Princess's favorite plan of having the Name and estates go to the same person falls to the ground. Had She made another Choice the title of Prince Daschkaw would not have been lost as the Emperor had consented to this Young Man's taking it, but respect to his own family title made him refuse it otherwise than as Count Woronzow Daschkaw which is now his name.

M<sup>me</sup> Volk, our Krouglo friend & her Sister M<sup>lle</sup> Surmine have made a journey from Moghiloff to see the Princess. They both look ill. They have had misfortunes, & *the times* bear hard on their income.

*Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> N.S. (1<sup>st</sup> of Sept<sup>r</sup> O.S.) TROITSKOE*

" We shall have been here a fortnight to-morrow. . . . Troitskoe appear'd to me this year to much more advantage than any other I ever saw it. All the trees are rich in foliage & the purity of the air is so reviving after the heat, Dust & Stench of Moscow that I inhale it with delight. The young Princess & the M<sup>lle</sup> Kotchetoffs are likewise a great acquisition & Marietta is a treasure to me. Anna Petrovna set out a week ago to visit her Mother near Tula. I am establish'd most agreeably in my Appartments & have a range of 4 besides the use of a 5<sup>th</sup> if I please. Miloe the Canary

<sup>1</sup> Count Ivan Woronzow-Daschkaw (1790-1856), only son of Princess Daschkaw's first cousin Count Ilarion Woronzow by his wife Irène, daughter of Privy Councillor Ivan Ismailoff. Was given permission by the Czar Alexander I in 1807 to take the title of Count Woronzow-Daschkaw. He married Alexandrina, daughter of M. Cyril Narishkin, Master of Ceremonies at the Imperial Court by his wife, *née* Princess Marie Lobanoff-Rostowsky. Their son, Count Ilarion Woronzow-Daschkaw (1837-1916), was Minister of the Court under Alexander III and Governor of the Caucasus in the reign of the late Czar Nicholas II. He married Princess Elizabeth Shuvalov, great-granddaughter of Count Simon Woronzow. His only sister Irene married the only son of Field-Marshal Prince Paskevich, Viceroy of Poland. She was obliged to flee from her palace during the Bolshevik Revolution and died only a few years ago in the house of a servant where she had taken refuge.



COUNTESS IRENE WORONZOW

*From the portrait by Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun formerly in the possession  
of Count I. Woronzow-Daschkaw*



bird is brought home in great beauty & perfectly well educated by Mr Preatkin the Gardener who had made it quite tame & agreeable. Lubeznoi the Dog is still alive, struggling with his Malady.

But we have had a dreadful history on the subject of Dogs. 'tis now almost a month since Fidelle shew'd symptoms of Madness, but as she continued to drink Water & did not bite anyone the Princess was in hopes it would pass. At our request however she sent her the following Day to the Country with the Dogs' favorite attendant Stepusha. On the Journey she still answer'd to her name & continued to drink from time to time. During a moment that Stepusha was absent she flew at the Postilion who drove the Cart & bit him, after which she remain'd quiet & answer'd to her Name as before. She then bit the finger of Stepusha, but they did not dare to put to death the favorite of the Princess. She was sent to a Village Dr & died there. In a week after Stepusha shew'd symptoms of madness. A village Quack undertook to cure him & cut his finger which had been bit to obtain some drops of blood which he mix'd with milk & gave him to drink. The man is certainly better & we are assured *quite well* as is the Postillion. However they are now at Moscow as we all declared our terror of meeting them at Troitskoe & they are all under the Care of a Physician but refuse to take any medicine from him, & so Matters rest. We have had a most Providential Escape as Fidelle was an entire Eve<sup>g</sup> & Morning amongst us in a state of madness tho' not violent. . . .

*Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> [September]*

" This has been a complete Autumn Day—rain, Fog & Cold. 'tis one of the million of feasts which are in the Greek religion, but the Priest was drunk & did not perform any service.

The Church was found involv'd in a sad business on our arrival from Moscow. The brother of Gabriel (call'd Basil, who is found to be a complete villain in more respects than one) had plotted with the Deacon & one of the Chaunters who is son to the Priest to ruin the Steward (Condrat the big Polish Man) & for this purpose invented a letter in form of a petition from him to the Senate of Moscow asserting his right to freedom as a Noble of Poland. This was the more malicious as it revived an old Story on the same

subject which took place 10 or 12 years ago. It seems that by the former Constitution of Poland any Person who could bribe 12 Nobles to swear he was Noble & Cousin to one of them became in effect a Noble. By this means the body of Noblesse had & has many upstart Members. Whether Mons<sup>r</sup> the Steward *had* been sworn to be Noble or not I don't know, but he declared himself such & twice attempted to escape. At present he enjoys peace & plenty & appears contented. The reason this Petition was invented was to revenge his having opposed a villinous & cruel fraud which Bazil & the Deacon had practic'd secretly with success for some time : that of distributing false bank notes amongst the Peasants one of whom had been thrown into Prison for forgery because he offer'd one of the Notes in payment of a bill at Moscow & was only free'd on the Steward's answering for his reappearing if call'd for. The poor man escaped narrowly receiving the Knout & being sent to Siberia.

On the Princess's arrival the whole affair was of course told to her. She immediately sent for the Seneschal of Serpokoff & made an official statement of the case to him delivering her subject Basil into his hands. The Deacon and Chaunter, aware how they were involved & that other things would come to light on investigating the affair, persuaded the wretched Drunkard of a Priest (whose only vice is a love of drink but carried to the most beastly & scandalous excess) to go off with them for a purpose w<sup>ch</sup> the Priest reveal'd in a drunken fit after their return. It seems that if the books of the Church transactions were to be examin'd it would be found out by the dates of births & Christenings that the Priest had repeatedly married boys of 11, 12 & 13 to Women of 20 & 25 or older which is against the law. The Runian Priests (or Popes as they are Call'd) are often brib'd by the Peasants to marry their Sons however young to strong *two handed* women in order to get by the arrival of the bride another labourer to work at the Harvest, and as for the partys themselves they are not consulted. This Circumstance & perhaps some other misdemeanours made them resolve to take refuge amongst the Roscolnicks<sup>1</sup> who are a strong body & might have kept them conceal'd or favour'd their escape from the Empire ; but whether it was fear of the Princess, or for what other reason I know not, the Chiefs of the Sect refus'd to

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 237.

receive them into their body, & they return'd back to Troitskoe quietly at the end of 4 or 5 days, & in that state the affair rests for the present. The Priest's Mother is still alive, an old bedridden Creature past the age of 100, & for her sake the Princess would rather continue blind to various faults than embitter her dying moments by having her son turn'd away as he merits & has long done. The Old Woman has been Daughter, Wife, Mother, & Grandmother to Priests.

*Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> [September]*

" Last Friday we got a dreadful fright about Suzan who shew'd symptoms of madness just like Fidelle, bit 2 Dogs, Favon & Berfa, flew at a little boy, bit a Pig till the wretched animal was in gores of blood, and Nastasia (with rosy cheeks) narrowly escaped being likewise bitten had I not recommended her to put on a p<sup>r</sup> of Man's Gloves while she held the little Dog in her Arms before Peasants could be found to take her to the nearest Dog D<sup>r</sup> near Serpoukoff. She could not have escaped as Susan siez'd her hand w<sup>ch</sup> was alone saved by the strong leather gloves. The Princess was in very bad spirits. We sat with her till very late & I believe she got but little rest. She is excessively grieved about Suzan. To-day we have got good accounts of her & an assurance that she will recover entirely. . . .

*Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> [September]*

" The history of Suzan is finish'd. The poor little Animal is dead. . . .

. . . . .

*Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 1807 N.S.*

" Last Saturday I had the Comfort of receiving an account of Kitty's safe arrival in Eng<sup>d</sup>. Her Voyage however was dreadful—5 weeks & tremendous squalls. Thank God however that it is over. She was within a day of seeing the taking of Copenhagen by the English & found herself in the midst of the fleet which was station'd before the town Commanded by Ad<sup>l</sup> Gambier<sup>1</sup> & L<sup>d</sup> Cathcart.<sup>2</sup> . . .

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> William Schaw (Cathcart), 10th Lord Cathcart (1755-1843), Scottish general and diplomat in British service. Formerly Commander-in-Chief



Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> [November]

" Another history of Mad Dogs ! I protest what with one thing or the other we are come to that pass that it is become dangerous to venture into the garden to take a walk for our healths. Daria Nicholovna & I did so on Friday Eve<sup>s</sup> & had not return'd to the House half an hour when a Mad Dog from a distant village came running full speed exactly to the place we had quitted (the new Wall which is building round the brickery), bit a Man who was employ'd there at the Work, rush'd on to another Village, bit a Man, 2 Women, & 2 Children & was at length kill'd ! Another of our Dogs is likewise a victim, one of Fidelle's race call'd Flora. It belong'd to Jerkoff, was bit by this outrageous animal till the blood flow'd & has of course been kill'd since to save our lives. But 'tis by no means impossible that other Dogs or pigs may have been bit & that matters will not rest there.

Yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup> the Priest's Son, who is as great a rogue & villain as breathes, was found at the door of the antichamber leading to my room. He was just going to come in but the Steward who had seen him coming into the House follow'd & turn'd him away. 'tis probable he wanted me to ask some favour from the P. as so many others have done, but 'tis possible he wish'd to rob or to remark the Apartments. In short there is endless danger in that quarter. The Priest, Deacon, this Chaunter, the judges of Taruss (our good friends who dined here lately & who came in their publick Characters to judge the history of forgery & Bazil the delinquent &c. &c. &c. &c.), Bazil, & a tribe of others (amongst them Gen<sup>l</sup> Y[ellagin]'s son in law the Mayor of T[ula]) are found to have got *snacks* in the business, & are so link'd together that, tho' their guilt is as clear as the day light, yet there is every reason to believe that the entire business will be hush'd up & that justice may go sing *Shildy budildy* ! This Village contains a nest of Vipers & where to find redress or how to discover their extent is the difficulty. Corruption is certainly coming fast to its extreme degree. As for justice 'tis a joke. No such thing exists, & its *shadow* covers

in Ireland and Ambassador to Russia. For his services in charge of the army in the Baltic in 1807 he was created Viscount. Again appointed to the St Petersburg embassy in 1812, where his diplomacy was of the greatest consequence in overthrowing Napoleon. Created Earl Cathcart in 1814. Was a strong Tory in politics and a close friend of Castlereagh.

vice enough to make me shudder. The name nearly serves as a cloak to encourage the Commission of Crimes.

There is another instance in the case of Anna Petrovna whose Aunt left her 10,000 roubles upon a Mortgage where her right was so clear that even the judges could not deny it, but their plan to favour the adverse party was as effectual as if they had given them the Decree in their favour. They have postpon'd the judgement, & in the meantime they enjoy the interest of the money (interest is generally by the by 10 p<sup>r</sup> cent, lawfully 'tis only 5) and will in the end by gaining time gain all, and A.P. remain with the expence of her law suit to console her.

*Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> [November]*

“ Yesterday’s post brought the news of a *suspension* of friendship between this Country & Eng<sup>d</sup>! This is woeful news indeed, & heaven only knows what may be the Consequence. A thousand fears Crowd upon my mind, & I feel compleatly in a Labyrinth. All intercourse by letter will of course be stopt, & in what state of misery will my family be to say nothing of what I shall suffer in ceasing to receive any news from them. Great God in what a state is the World, & to what great event is this leading! I must & will employ myself continually to drive away thoughts which might weaken my mind & unfit me for the uses of the world & the exertions which may yet be necessary. ‘This is now my first duty & the mode by which I may merit the great recompence of self approbation. To the protection of the Almighty I commit my family & friends & pray God to enable me to act with fortitude in the tryals which may yet be before me!!

To MRS ROBERT WILMOT

TROITSKOE. 29<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 1807

“ . . . I have not a word to tell you respecting the effect public matters is to produce on my movements. You see we are still at Troitskoe—still confin’d by the extreme badness of the roads which to say truth are nearly impassable as I have told Kitty, & my uneasiness is by no means inconsiderable on every Account. I ought to see people, understand what ought to be done, & act accordingly; but an overruling providence which has permitted

wise plans & great measures to be frustrated in the most inconceivable manner appears even in small ones to render individual calculation of no avail. Whether I am doom'd to rejoin my dear my beloved friends or to pass a longer period in this Country I know not, but of this I am certain that respecting *me* you should all make yourselves perfectly easy. I have a steady & powerful friend in my beloved Princess who this day spoke to me with maternal affection & assured me that if my return could be effected she would use every effort to promote it, & if not, no circumstance should be wanting to secure my ease and comfort as precaution in case of her death, & that as long as she liv'd I knew how deeply her heart & soul was interested in my happiness.

I have already told K. & I repeat it, that I feel no alarm for myself. The Emperour is incapable of acting otherwise than with Nobleness & Generosity, & the P. will recommend me to him added to the promises already given by the two Empresses. But be assured if a personal exertion was necessary I am not one that would sit still & whyne while it was in my power to turn to account the little I know; 'tis in this way that a young woman can alone prove her Courage. To turn aside from idleness & the train of nervous thoughts it engenders, I will certainly learn Italian & the Harp *Couchée* the entire of this Winter as I had proposed doing for my amusement. In a word weigh all matters with candour & let us confess that my lot is far remov'd from unhappiness. Could I be but assured from time to time that you are all as well as I am, I should bow with unfeign'd cheerfulness to what's inevitable; but when my fancy suggests that my beloved father is unhappy on my account, that K. allows herself to imagine groundless alarms, that my precious Edw<sup>d</sup> is perhaps gone to meet an untimely Fate on the shores of Egypt, I own I feel all the misery of Separation, & even the support of being free from self reproach vanishes. . . .

Before I forget, let me say a word of pecuniarys. The income of my money will soon I flatter myself clear off my debts, after which should I remain here any considerable time 'tis my absolute desire & earnest request that the Good Custom of *Easter Eggs* be continued so as to give me the consolation of thinking it is good for something—for example, £30 to each beginning with R[obert], K[itzy], A[licia], H[arriet], D[orothea], Edw<sup>d</sup> & A[nna] M[aria]<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brothers and sisters of Martha Wilmot.

to bring up the rear would leave a considerable overplus which I should wish in any case of obvious utility not to say necessity to be employ'd frankly & affectionately as if I was on the spot. K. knows my wishes on that score, & provided no debt is incur'd I ask nothing on returning home but the satisfaction of knowing that I have contributed in some measure to the comfort of my family trifling as it is. As for what's *here*, I fear there is little to be reckon'd. (Should D[orothea]'s affairs with J. L[atham]<sup>1</sup> prosper I repeat the old story of either interest or principal, whichever she likes, of £1500. *More* I am not imprudent enough to offer, *now* that my income is reduced to Less than the half of what it was reckon'd last Summer.) . . .

4<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> N.S.

“ The serious cast of this Letter, dearest E[liza], was occasion'd by my hearing that Sweden likewise was E[ngland]'s Enemy. The effect of such a stroke would be too obvious to need a comment. You see how it affected me, & I trust I have a right to say that my nature becomes elastic & makes the best of necessitys. The thing that agonises me is incertitude. Blessed be God that fatal rumour is contradicted.

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup> 1807*

“ . . . The news of last night's Post was that there are strong suspicions of the plague's being at Moscow, that Police Officers go from House to House to see that the familys fumigate with juniper berrys and other preservatives against the horrible Malady. The P. thinks our being detain'd here is an interposition of Providence in her behalf. I think that the news is powerfully exaggerated. The season is so unwholesome particularly for Russian Constitutions, that it may naturally cause diseases but after having escaped during the Summer with the return of so many diseased soldiers 'tis not improbable that the Month of Dec<sup>r</sup> should be the period for the Plague to shew itself. In all events the frost & snow which

<sup>1</sup> Son of John Latham of Meldrum, Co. Tipperary. His sister Anne married in 1812 as his second wife William (Hare), 1st Earl of Listowel. Dorothea Wilmot did not marry him but became the wife of Roger Eaton of Parglas, Wales.

*must* soon appear will clear the air & I trust remove all infection. *Pleasant times* however for people to live in. God Almighty grant that the New Year may dawn under a happier planet than 1807 sets. It has been a most awful & most eventful period. I feel a sort of superstitious pleasure that it will soon pass.

TO HER FATHER

TROITSKOE. Dec<sup>r</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>, 1807

"We are to set out for Moscow tomorrow where I hope to learn the state of things & perhaps to be able to form some guess at what may be my own movements. . . .

As for the foundation of y<sup>r</sup> uneasiness which I am aware lies in another channel<sup>1</sup> there are various reasons to suppose all enmity & petty jealousies laid asleep. To remove me from this Country was her object. 'tis likewise my only one. Consequently we are united because extremes meet, & in her enmity I find the *wishes* of a friend. Her credit is not only declining but probably ended. The Governor of Mo[scow] has rec<sup>d</sup> orders to return the children to their Mother.<sup>2</sup> K. who knows all these things & the inferences to be drawn will be pleased when she hears this news simply as a proof of Madam's declining power & influence. Besides, the 2 Neices of the P. are as much to be fear'd by her as I am, & the Daughter in Law more. No, no, make y<sup>r</sup>selves easy I implore, & fill your letters with all the gay things you do that I may dance in idea, being resolv'd to go to no balls, & figure in idea in all walks & rides &c. &c. &c. &c. . . .

MOSCOW. 27<sup>th</sup> [December]

"... My dearest Princess has acted by me in a manner worthy of herself. She has written to Count Romanzoff the Minister of the exterior<sup>3</sup> to request he will as a friend inform her whether I can with safety pass into Sweden to be ready for the Spring to return from thence to Eng<sup>d</sup>. The letter goes to-morrow, & for 10

<sup>1</sup> Madame Scherbenin, Princess Daschkaw's daughter.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> Count Nicholas Rumianzoff (1754-1826), Minister for Foreign Affairs. Later Imperial Chancellor and President of the Council of Empire. Was one of Alexander I's most industrious ministers and probably did more than any other man of his time to encourage geographical discovery in Russia.

days I can know nothing of the result. 'tis possible that while you are reading it I may be in Stockholm, but 'tis likewise very possible I may be just where I am, & I do assure you that I have so much hope & expectation of peace that were it not that my sense of right & my apprehension of your all being uneasy on my account spurs me on so much activity, I would remain perfectly tranquil. At all events I think my dearest R[obert]'s Journey is at an end, for the effect of all this makes me decided not to suffer him to make a Voyage of the kind & indeed renders it needless. . . .

You must not wonder, my dearest Father, if the Princess does not write to you. She suffers painfully on the subject of being separated from me, & I don't think she will be equal to the task of writing. God knows my heart bleeds upon the subject, but conceiving it my duty to make every effort to return home, I have none of the cruel agitations arising from incertitude or a combat between inclination & duty. Eliza's letter is full of the *History*. She wishes me to collect more materials &c. &c. &c. Let her talk to Kitty for half an hour, & she will then understand the impossibility of fulfilling her wish. A thousand times has the idea occupy'd me particularly in the beginning, & yesterday I lit upon her sentiments on religion which I had written down at the moment, & which is an atom excessively interesting being pearls & rubys dropping from the Good Fairy's lips.<sup>1</sup> It was written 4

<sup>1</sup> The following is Martha Wilmot's translation of these "sentiments": "I have heard many people make great professions, and I have known many rigid performers of certain external observances; but I have never met with any one whose high conceptions of the greatness and goodness of the Deity equalled what I *feel*. I cannot lower it to the mundane ideas which confine the generality of people, and which make them reduce their Maker nearly to a level with themselves. I cannot suppose that my Creator influences every act of my life; I am not presumptuous enough to imagine it! In forming a creature and endowing it with a full perception of right and wrong, I conceive that absolute liberty of choice is placed by the Almighty in the power of each individual; else what is justice? Convinced of this and of future reward or punishment according to the use I make of such liberty, I very early reflected on my lot in life and the duties belonging to it. These I have endeavoured to fulfil, and if I have failed it is through error of judgement. My ideas of right I have invariably followed to the prejudice of worldly interests. The hope therefore of acquittal at the great day of judgement sustains me under many a weary and melancholy hour."

On another occasion, when conversing with some "modern philosophers and underminers of our faith," Princess Daschkaw (according to Martha Wilmot) could not resist saying: "And what does all this lead

years ago, & every day renders that kind of occupation more impossible. Would to God it were otherwise. Both K. & I often press'd for more ample details of the circumstances. In short K. is an Encyclopedia in which may be found the meaning of everything. Of course the Memoir is read only in profound Mystery. . . .

*From HER JOURNAL*

*Saturday Night 3<sup>d</sup> Jan<sup>ry</sup> 1808. N.S.*

"We dined today with Count Ostrowman whose laugh is enough to inspire death itself. Old Prince Gallitzen the Grand Chamberlain has been dead a Month. I'm told that Count Alexis Orloff is dying. How many of the old Courtiers of Catherine's reign who liv'd here with Eastern Magnificence & render'd Moscow a sort of Museum where Historic Curiosities might be seen in high preservation, some of them like absolute Petrefactions, are pass'd & gone within the short period that I have known Russia! The first Assemblage of them I ever saw I well remember was at the Grand Chamberlain's in his Splendid Gallery. The room was a blaze of Diamonds and embroidery of Gold, all remnants of the well known Magnificence of Catherine. I was enchanted & highly interested in the scene. At this moment the Count Ostrowman and my beloved Princess Daschkaw are all that remain of the dignified Voterys of her Shrine, & were it not for the walls of the Kremlin and its towers Moscow would not boast a single attraction beyond the balls and Suppers which crowd upon each other interrupted only by Dinners, breakfasts, Morning dances & Gambling.

*7<sup>th</sup> [January] N.S.*

*Xmass Day Old Style. Wednesday*

"Count Alexis Orloff died at 4 o'clock Yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup>!

to? I am not eloquent enough to puzzle a good cause by force of argument, but here is a very simple idea which satisfies me. My idea is fixed, and incapable of yielding to your reasoning; but suppose it otherwise—you make me hazard all to gain nothing. Is not that a self-evident folly, too egregiously so to be reasoned upon? If your principles be virtuous, just and good, those of the New Testament are eminently so likewise; and what rewards, what noble incentives to virtue, do they not hold out! What consolation in misfortune!"—*Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, ii, 237-239.

*Friday 9<sup>th</sup> [January]*

" This Morning Count Orloff was buried. M. Divoff (with whom we din'd) and his two sons were at the interment & mention a most awful & terrific circumstance which signaliz'd the event. At the celebrated battle of Tcheshmé gain'd by Count Orloff (or rather by Admiral Greig<sup>1</sup> for him) the Ship on which Count Orloff's brother was supposed to be took fire from the bullets of the Turks & was blown up. The Count, horrified at the fate of his brother, fainted away, & was falling into the Sea when a Sergeant caught him in his arms & saved his life. From that moment the Count became his friend & benefactor, & the poor Man has always made one of His Family. To-day he was one of the persons appointed to support the Count's Coffin. His grief for the Count's death has been excessive, & at the moment he had advanc'd as far as the Staircase his Mouth & Eyes were bathed in blood and he dropt down dead!!

The Charming young Countess Orloff his daughter is afflicted beyond all expression, but She is a most superiour creature. She makes none of the parade of woe so usual here. She has however had constancy & courage enOUGH each day to visit the cold remains of her Father while no one was present of the tribes who have been as usual to Kiss the body. Her entire life has been pass'd amidst scenes which would have corrupted a common mind ; hers has preserv'd all its purity & risen superiour to every seduction. ' She intends to remain in her father's house (or rather her own) during the six weeks of religious retirement & prayer previous to the offerings on the 40<sup>th</sup> Day when it is suppose'd the Soul is releas'd from Purgatory &c. &c. &c. &c. Countess Anne Orloff's Fortune is enormous. Her rent role is 300,000 roubles a year (£40,000 Sterling) besides which her property in diamonds, pearls & all sorts of valuables is incalculable. 'tis say'd that there are 2 or three Trunks fill'd with Duckets amongst other things.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Samuel Greig (1735-1788), Scottish sailor who became an admiral in the Russian Navy and Governor of Cronstadt in the reign of Catherine II. He was considered by many to have been the real victor at Chesmé. He married a Scot, Sarah Cook, who was related to the explorer Captain Cook. On her husband's death Lady Greig received a pension of 2000 roubles and a large estate from Catherine II. Their son Alexis also became a Russian admiral. Their daughter Eugenie is mentioned above, p. 134.



*Monday 10<sup>th</sup> [January]*

"... On Saturday we din'd with Prince Yousouppoff<sup>1</sup> in his Tartar Palace which in no respect that I can find out differs from any other House of equal dimensions. He has added a spacious gallery to his old House which is extremely agreeable, & one descends a winding Staircase to enter it first passing thro' a Library. The Gallery is furnish'd with a variety of beautiful paintings, amongst which 2 of Angelica Kauffmann's performance pleased me the most. (I'm told that that celebrated Artist is dead.)<sup>2</sup> There are likewise Birds of every description to enliven the Guests, & as the Gallery is enormous their Clatter & Cry produces a good effect of banishing Ceremony & inducing people to go from the Cages of the Parrots to visit the Cockatoo, the Paroquets, the beautiful but sulky Purple & Yellow Bird, & so on in every gradation to the Melodious Nightingales of which he has a long file of Cages & tells me that they sing *responsively* to each other the Evenings and early in the Mornings, sometimes likewise in the day time but rarely.

From the Gallery one enters a Green House at the end of which is painted a Perspective which has a magnificent effect & in the Center of which is a rotunda for Entertaining Company Surrounded with Orange & leamon Trees of Great height. But it was too cold for us to stay long that day, so we return'd to the lovely Gallery where I have not yet spoken of the Statues, Billiard table, Stoves, Books of Prints lying on tables & every Species of elegance to excite ease & exhibit the good taste & refinement of the Master of the House. But I owe him a grudge for not Shewing me his Tartar retreat, & so I'll tell tales on him. 'tis say'd that in reality he *has* a suite of apartments in the Tartar taste with oil'd paper instead of Glass Windows, but that they are inhabited by fair Dulcineas who are guarded with all the jealous care of the Grand Turk's Seraglio. A young french Woman burst her prison doors last Week, leaving a letter to say she prefer'd freedom of the West to the gloomy Magnificence of the East. His dismay is still the

<sup>1</sup> Prince Nicholas Youssouppoff (1751-1831), Russian politician and traveller of Tartar origin. Formerly President of the College of Manufacturers and Director of Crown Lands. Later Governor of the Kremlin. Noted for his love of women and the extravagance of his entertainments.

<sup>2</sup> Angelica Kauffmann, the famous Swiss artist, died in November 1807 at Rome, where she had been living in retirement for many years.

talk of the Town & Tartarian oil'd paper a delicate subject with his Highness.

I shall now tell a tale on myself. At the moment we enter'd the Court a traineau with gorgeous trappings drove from the door & in the same instant I saw my Chamberlain who struck with the P's equiquage beckon'd one of the Laquays & had a parley with him.<sup>1</sup> I have some reason to suppose he was question'd respecting the fair ones within the Coach, for in the next moment he appear'd at our heels & follow'd us thro' winding passages and winding Staircases into the Gallery. I was evidently the Magnet, but his evil Star reign'd for he could not stay unask'd to a Dinner of invitation, & invited to stay he was not. A few tender enquiries therefore respecting my health was all he could atchieve & so disappear'd ! That Man's Conduct is too singular not to have some Motive which I do not yet understand. He is so openly particular whenever he meets me, & that meeting during 2 Years' Acquaintance having never exceeded 3 times, & last Saturday shews him so neglectful of opportunities to behold the light of my Countenance that I cannot make head or tail of him. All I wish for is a fair & open opportunity of receiving with gratitude the offer of his Stars, ribbons, Gold Key, bow, fair Domains & rank, & with infinite Sensibility refusing them all, but at this rate I fear it will never happen.

*Friday 14<sup>th</sup> [January] N.S.*

" Yesterday we din'd at M. de Stchutkin's where we met Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff & his *promise* the Princess Gallitzen. She is frightful & 43 years old, but she is rich & he is poor. I never happen'd to see a pair in all my life whose Countenances express so plainly Violence on his part & ill temper on hers. This Wedding is to take place very soon. The Emperour has sent him 5000 roubles for Wedding Expences. Another Wedding which is to be celebrated soon is young M. de Narishkin with Miss Mettam (Henrietta) who lives with & has been educated by Countess Bouterline. Her Father was Cap<sup>tn</sup> of a Vessel an Englishman. Her Mother, I believe

<sup>1</sup> M. Alexander Narishkin (1760-1826), Grand Chamberlain at the Court of Alexander I. Noted for his wit, love of pleasure and prodigality. He was married to Marie, daughter of Admiral Alexis Seniavine and sister-in-law of Count Simon Woronzow.

English, became poor & unfortunate tho' married to a russian Adm<sup>l</sup> after the death of her Cap<sup>tn</sup>, & to cut the matter short appear'd in Count B's family as Children's Maid to little Count Petrushia Bouterline. On her death bed she committed Henrietta to the Countess who educated her & ends in marrying her to *her own* Cousin German.

Here's a circumstance which I heard lately respecting the very Major Wilson with whom young Narishkin fought last year against the French. It was mention'd at M. Divoff's by L<sup>d</sup> Somerton who din'd there the day we did. It seems he is a young Man full of life, spirit, enterprise, & a complete English Soldier wishing to see Service to the fullest extent of the idea & forward to encounter every danger. This Character had made him so remarkable in the Armys that he was at last call'd by all partys '*The English Officer*'. The Commander of the Kossacks gave him 2 Cossack Soldiers as a guard in his Sallies against the Enemy by Night and Day. In one of those excursions a Bashkeer rais'd his Pike & would have run him thro' the body had not the Kossack quick as lightning rush'd forward, snatch'd off his helmet & placed *his own Cap* on his head to make the other comprehend that they were friends! This presence of mind saved Major Wilson's life. But another anecdote of him shews him a bad Statesman & shews on what hangs the fate of Nations. He had form'd a friendship at the Army with a certain M. Arkharoff, a russian (married to the Widow of Count Valerien Zouboff whose 1<sup>st</sup> Spouse a Pole is alive by the by). This M. Arkharoff was at S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg when Major Wilson arriv'd there as Courier from London respecting the present critical State of public affairs. He brought with him a poem written in ridicule of the late transactions on the Continent, & particularly the interview between A[lexander] & B[onaparte]. This poem he had the imprudence not only to shew but to give a Copy of to M. Arkharoff who had the honour & friendship instantly to betray him & shew it to the Emp. who, offended by the Satire, refus'd to see Major W. or even the Ambassador from that moment. This is at least a Story universally talk'd of. How true its foundation I know not.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This story was true and resulted in Wilson's expulsion from Russia. See above, p. 296, note 2.

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> [January]

" . . . I am afraid I have singe'd the heart of a boy of 17 by so ridiculous a circumstance that I am going to write it for K's future amusement. *Pocket handkerchief* (M<sup>me</sup> G——ff) who speaks nothing but russ was seated at my right hand, & as my powers in that language are rather limited I cast my eyes around for sensible objects to aid imagination & make myself intelligible. Unfortunately they fix'd on the youngest of her grandsons, & remarking that he was wonderfully improv'd in appearance & grown quite Handsome I had the folly to say so. No sooner had I done so than She call'd him over, & when he ask'd *for what* She told him it was to admire him as *people* (looking significantly at me) began to admire his beauty. The boy blush'd black & I look'd ridiculously silly on perceiving that his mind entertain'd no doubt of my admiration. From that moment his vanity was so flatter'd that every minute he *gaz'd on his Slave*, and I was so excessively diverted that I could not resist telling it to A.P. who told me I should occasion the Misfortune of her Nephew. At dinner it continued to our high Amusement, but matters became irresistibly ludicrous when he appear'd in our box at the Playhouse in the Eve<sup>g</sup>, and it was the very first time he had ever thought of coming near us.

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> [January]

" Yesterday was a Complete Day of dissipation for me. In the Morning I went accompanied by Princess Anne Simonovna & the 2 M<sup>lles</sup> Kotchetoffs to see Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff's wedding with the Princess Gallitzen, as I had never seen a Noble's wedding in Russia. We went to the Church at 12 o'clock & soon after arriv'd the Bridegroom in full dress. The Bride follow'd half an hour later, dress'd in Lace, Satin, a bandeau of Diamonds, & Diamond earrings. Their rings were exchanged three times ; they sip'd three times the wine, emblematic of sharing equality the joys or sorrows of life, they wore the Nuptial Crowns, & were led three times round the Altar. The Priest then read a sort of Exhortation or Sermon, & that's all. The bride was not veil'd as the Peasants are, nor is a Noble's Wedding so interesting as a Peasant's. There was a good number of Persons in Church. . . . After having congratulated the Bridals we return'd home. By the by Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff quitted the Church *before* his Lady.

In the Eve<sup>s</sup> Anna Petrovna & I went to M. de Tutelman, the Governor General's ball, given for the birth Day of the Empress Elizabeth. There was a Lottery where every Lady drew a prize. I got a bunch of Asparagus which open'd & gave me Verses & Sweetmeats. M<sup>lle</sup> Tatischeff got a roll of Music which was very *d propos* to her talent. We danc'd, saw a great number of People, & were very well amused. I saw my Chamberlain, but I have nothing to tell & rather fear he has some idea that my Fortune is not so great as report had made it, as his manner had nothing extraordinary in it tho' near enough to me for a moment to speak in his usual Strain. I am griev'd at not having the opportunity of refusing him. We return'd home early. . . .

*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> [January]*

"Yesterday the Princess took the air for a Wonder & I accompany'd her. We call'd at Senator Lunel's & heard M<sup>lle</sup> Lunel play on the harp delightfully. Field, an Englishman, is the famous Harpsichord teacher here at present,<sup>1</sup> & Adams for the Harp—nothing but their style is tolerated. . . .

. . . . .

*Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>ry</sup> N.S.*

"Heavens, all my torments are beginning again as fresh as ever—perhaps I may set out for Eng<sup>d</sup> in 3 days & the Agony my dearest Princess suffers makes both her & I unfit for anything.

*Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> [February]*

"I have suffer'd misery these 2 days & do so still, but my Journey to Petersburg is fix'd & from thence to Eng<sup>d</sup> if Col<sup>l</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen are not gone & will allow me to join their party. Aquilina & M<sup>lle</sup> Kotchettov's maid Masha (Mashinka) are helping Arena & Martishka & all are working like mad for me I am to travel with Gen<sup>l</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Loptoff who I saw married the other day as far as St Petersburg.

Oh my God how agoniz'd I am about my beloved Princess.

<sup>1</sup> John Field (1782-1837), musical composer. He was, in fact, not English but Irish, having been born in Dublin of Irish parents. He enjoyed an immense popularity in Russia, where he lived for over twenty-five years—by reason of his romantic music, particularly his "Nocturnes." He was the inventor of this species of musical composition and Chopin owed much to him on this account.

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> [February]

"The Princess mention'd last Night a Circumstance of her Mother's life which I am surpris'd she has omitted in her own history. M<sup>lle</sup> Surmine<sup>1</sup> while yet a Child (on account of some family arrangements, her fortune being very great) was married to a Prince Dolgorouky ! Very shortly after this Young Man was involv'd in the disgrace of all his Family & banish'd for life to Siberia by the Empress Anna. The Mother of M<sup>lle</sup> Surmine (the same Lady with whom Princess Daschkaw lived till she was 4 years old) threw herself at the feet of the Empress & petition'd a divorce for her daughter which she readily obtain'd, & in a few months married her to Count Romain (Robert) Worontzoff.<sup>2</sup> On the accession of the Empress Elizabeth the elder brother of Count Rob<sup>t</sup> (Count Michel Worontzoff) was all powerful at Court, & persuaded the Empress to recall the Dolgoroukys. Their gratitude for such a blessing as Liberty and *all* that made life itself desirable which they owed *alone* to Count Worontzow (for Eliz<sup>th</sup> was not inclin'd to favor them) soon brought them to his House with hearts overflowing with gratitude. The *ci-devant* Mademoiselle Surmine was present at their unexpected entrance & amongst them instantly perceiv'd her Husband who recogniz'd her as quickly.<sup>3</sup> A mutual

<sup>1</sup> Martha Surmine (1718-1745), daughter of M. Ivan Surmine, a wealthy grain merchant in Astrakhan, married first in 1729 Prince Youri Dolgorouky. Her father contrived to leave her a rich heiress in spite of the fact that his property had been confiscated by Peter the Great for alleged peculation. She married Princess Daschkaw's father, Count Roman Woronzow, in 1736 and died ten years later of typhoid fever.

<sup>2</sup> Count Roman Ilarionovich Woronzow (1707-1783), Governor of Vladimir and Yaroslav and father of Princess Daschkaw. In the reign of the Empress Elizabeth he became Lieutenant-General and Senator, under Peter III he was appointed Commander-in-Chief and received the Order of St Andrew, while Catherine II advanced him to the governorship of the provinces of Vladimir and Yaroslav. He married Martha, daughter of M. Ivan Surmine and divorced wife of Prince Youri Dolgorouky, and on her death in 1745 he lived with various mistresses. In spite of a certain selfishness and love of pleasure which estranged him from his children he possessed, in Princess Daschkaw's words, "qualities which could not fail to inspire both love and admiration,—with a good and enlightened understanding he had a generous and benevolent soul, and was perfectly devoid of that sort of vanity and affectation which usually indicated feeble and small minds."

<sup>3</sup> Prince Youri Youriewich Dolgorouky was exiled to Siberia in 1731 at the instigation of the Empress Anne's minister Biren and was recalled in 1742. He married again in 1745 his relative Hélène, daughter of Prince Alexis Dolgorouky, and died a year later.

sensation of painful embarrassment was the only result of this meeting. She was happy in her 2<sup>d</sup> Marriage, & had he wish'd to reclaim her he had no right, *having been dead in Law*. By the by, a husband's & Wife's wealth being always distinct in Russia, the banishment of a Husband & confiscation of his property affects the Wife in nothing but what her heart suggests.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> [February]

"The state this House is in beggars all description. In the very midst of the Compleatest Misery on the subject of the Princess, pale as a ghost & my eyes swell'd out of my head, I am most devoutly taking *Lessons in Dancing*! I had begun to do so the Day before this panic occasion'd by Lord Royston's & L<sup>d</sup> Somerton's sudden departure made *my* departure a serious question with the Princess, & being resolv'd if possible to know something of the National dance (which a tissue of circumstances known only to myself has prevented my doing hitherto), I most heroically & magnanimously have undertaken it. As it consists however almost entirely in gesture & various expressions of face & as I am sensible but to one idea which probably shews itself my poor Master is in despair with me. In vain he tells me I must count *one, two, three*. & then smile, 1, 2, 3, & then look tender, 1, 2, 3, & then look joyous. In vain he stamps on the ground & bids me bend my '*Corpus*' as if I wish'd to embrace my Mother, & then going to the Glass flings himself in to the true position. For two days I was insensible even to the ridiculousness of the thing & did my very best to obey him till chancing to see myself in the Glass at the moment he was Yelling to me to bend my '*Corpus*', the entire scene flash'd upon me as I stood confess'd trying to bend my incorrigible *Corpus* while his was a perfect Snake in wreathy folds!

In the meantime down Stairs painful distresses arising from various causes, fresh horrors at Troitskoe, Priests, Deacons, false bank notes & divilments tinge every face with gloom & even terror. From thence return to my outer Appartment where the Pianofortee stands & *Fa, Sol, la, do, re, mi* at the pitch of Alexandre Kotcheff's voice salutes your ear. Areena is in floods of tears for my going, but the floor is spread over with silks, lace, crape, peasants' dresses & velvets, all looking so gay, and as if a wedding was going

to enliven the House ! Anna Petrovna, griev'd for my departure, fumes for other causes & in the midst of both confesses honestly she would give her eyes to go to the Assembly. . . .

*Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> [February]*

" . . . Yesterday I paid my farewell Visit at the Governor General's (M. Tutleman's) and ask'd him for my Passport &c. &c. Dorothea de Kotchetoff came with me. We were shown into the formidable Antichamber fill'd with the persons who wait every day the Great Man's levee ; from thence into his Cabinet where we were follow'd by most of those personages ; & in a few moments *he* appear'd all smiles & courtesy, came & sat down by me, heard my request with *galant* regrets, granted it with the same Embroidery, say'd a hundred flattering things, and on my expressing a particular wish to see M<sup>me</sup> de Tutelman tho' confin'd to her bed, he dispatch'd one of his House Kossacks clothed in Crimson & Gold to beg she would make me an exception to her general rule of not receiving any one. On her sending an affirmative he led me to the door, kiss'd my hand and bid us both adieu with every politeness that it was possible to shew. Amongst the Persons in the Antichamber was M. de Volkoff, one of the Masters of Police. With him likewise I had a parley full of politeness & courtesy on both sides. This is the person to whom M<sup>me</sup> S[cherbenin] address'd herself the day she made the scene in Church. When we went to M<sup>me</sup> Tutelman's apartments, the dear little Woman was in bed almost extenuated with weakness. She has likewise a dreadful Cough, & I fear cannot long hold out. She was in manner as usual that is delightful. . . .

I call'd on Countess Bouterline & found her kind & affect as she has uniformly been to me. Young Narishkin is married to M<sup>lle</sup> Mettam, but 'tis fear'd something unpleasant may be the consequence as he is still in the military Service & an officer ought not to marry without the Emperour's permission which he has not ask'd for. From her we went to Countess Worontzow's & M<sup>lle</sup> Narishkin's for a moment, & then return'd home. To-day the Princess rec<sup>d</sup> a Letter from Countess Irena Worontzow to whom she wrote requesting She would give me a room in her house during my stay at S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg. The Countess's letter is kindness itself & very flattering. The dear Princess has rec<sup>d</sup> likewise a



letter from Count Romantsoff on the subject of my passport. Yet here I am as firm as ever. A wayward or perhaps a fortunate fate seems to rule my destiny. All is ready for my departure, even the agony of bidding adieu is mitigated if not pass'd, yet Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff yields to his wife's wish of not travelling during the holidays ; I receive no letter from M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen ; in short *what* I am to do is all a mystery to me, even to the present hour. I have the misery of seeing my beloved Princess suffer agony. I do so too, yet nothing comes to a point. Oh the blessing of prompt & decided measures ! . . .

*Monday 19<sup>th</sup> [February]*

“ Yesterday I had a terrible scene with the dear P. on the subject of my departure. She was in Convulsions almost with the idea, & to make a long story short, seeing her reduced to such a state & receiving no letter from M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen (which convinces me she is already gone), I promis'd her I would stay, & so my Fate seems decided very differently from what I expected & (I must own) wish'd. . . . This Morn<sup>g</sup> I have had another conversation with the P. My situation is excessively painful. I can see no period by which to bound my thoughts on the subject of returning home & float in all the wild & torturing visions of Fancy which may now create happiness or misery, Life or death, with lot of my Family at pleasure. She has no Certitude to controul her.

*Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> [February]*

“ All is again chang'd.

*Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> [February]*

TWER (164 *Versts from Moscow*)

“ Chang'd indeed, since here I am on my way to St Petersburg with Gen<sup>l</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Loptoff, after having pass'd an agonizing week if ever Mortal did for above a Week. Nor am I better yet. The image of my beloved Princess, so true, so affectionate, so ardent in her friendship, & showing so much disinterestedness in her conduct towards me while her very soul was tortur'd & her health suffer'd visibly for my departure, haunts me continually. Good God what misery it is to separate from a real friend. Yesterday I did so & quitted my best beloved Russian Mother with feelings

which I cannot retrace without anguish. I did not take a formal leave, but upon going to her bed side as usual the dear Woman folded me in her Arms, as if she had a presentiment of what was going to happen. The Evening before She had made my heart bleed by a little Circumstance which characterises her with painful truth. After having prepared for the expences of the journey with Princely Magnificence, she found by accident a pair of Gloves which I had worn & on which my name was written. Those she took & with her Eyes bathed in tears ask'd me to leave with her. There is something so true, so simple, so unfeigned in everything she does that I thought my very heart would break, & really I am reduced to skin & bone with anguish.

The Cause of the Change in our plans was the uneasiness of my mind from fearing I was acting wrong in not *trying* at least to return home while a possibility of doing so remain'd. This she perceiv'd and, receiving a letter from Countess Irene Worontzow, she ask'd me whether I would go to Petersburg. I rather think She expected a refusal, for on my saying *Yes* that my mind would be more at ease, even tho' I was to return the next Day, I could perceive that disappointment & even anger were the movements of hers. But the latter yielded very soon to her maternal affection, particularly when she perceiv'd that it cost me as much to quit her as it cost her. From that moment however the resolution was taken. I go to Countess Worontzow's, & from thence either to Eng<sup>d</sup> or back to my beloved Princess.

Yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup> I left the entire House in floods of tears. I have left Lubesnoi with Dorothea Kotchettov. My trunks of books, Shubas, &c. &c. &c. I have left pack'd up & take with me two small ones with little more than meer necessaries. As I did not take leave of my blessed Princess, Gen<sup>l</sup> L. sent his Carriage for me & Anna Petrovna accompanied me to his House where I had to wait 3 hours before we set out. I had in the misery of the moment forgot my passport, & at Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff's was oblig'd to unlock my Trunks to search for it. It was not to be found, but A.P. who hurried away on purpose to search for it found it in my Bureau & sent it to me in time luckily. We found the House fill'd with Priests who say'd Masses for our safe & prosperous journey, & M<sup>me</sup> Loptoff told me she & her husband had been in several Churches during the Morn<sup>g</sup>. However there is a Superstition in

Russia that no one should begin a Journey on a Monday & the effect of this Superstition seems inclin'd to visit itself on me. We had not yet quitted Moscow when my poor dear affect<sup>d</sup> Arena felt a pain in her left knee. She suffer'd agony with it. This Eve<sup>g</sup> I have had a Physician for her who says 'tis an erysepelas & has given her herbs to apply to her Knee & salts in small quantities to take. I trust in God she may be better. She is now fast asleep poor thing.

I thought that little Angelic Mashinka would have broke her heart when I went away yesterday. Martishka, true to the character which Ellen gave her of being ' the finest Cryer in the three Kingdoms ', howl'd over me as if I was dead, & I was forc'd to stop her to prevent the Princess from hearing her. Areena's affliction at my possible departure is much more sincere. During the last preparations w<sup>ch</sup> have continued above a week with Nastasia (the Princess's *ci-devant femme de chambre*) coming every day to work, she scarcely pass'd a day without crying bitterly two or three times. That excellent Pologaia Constantinovna likewise, poor dear old Woman. In short 'tis flattering & consoling of, tho' painful at the moment, to find sincere affection shed tears at such a moment. Daria Nicholovna likewise. In short the 3 M<sup>lle</sup> Kotchetoffs, all, all, were in floods of tears. My good little friend M<sup>r</sup> Haws<sup>1</sup> was the person who chiefly spur'd me on to take the step I have done & which has cost me so dear that nothing short of my Family's uneasiness & K[itzy]'s nerves could have given me force enough to accomplish it. God Grant I may have acted right. 'tis certain I have quitted a tender Mother in quitting the P. Perhaps I may not be able to go, but in short the dye is cast, Fate must now decide & I am better pleased to be the creature of heaven's guidance than that of my own judgement which may err so easily.

M<sup>me</sup> la Generale Gleboff came to take leave of me on Saturday & to beg for a Lock of my hair. Her friend M<sup>me</sup> de Voikoff wrote me a note to ask me for a lock of *Apollo's tresses*. These two circumstances were mingled with Sentiment & consequently flattering, but my *Apollo* locks rec<sup>d</sup> a very different homage from the daughter in law of M<sup>me</sup> Gleboff, the great friend of Princess Ann Simonovna. I had given the latter a brooch incircled with my

<sup>1</sup> An English banker in St. Petersburg.

hair as pledge of friendship. The next day she told me her friend M<sup>me</sup> Gleboff had been on her knees to prevail on her to obtain a lock of my hair to make such another for her, *as there was no procuring anything so beautiful or rare*. This Lady has no sort of attachment to me & is very slightly acquainted. Besides she did not affect to colour her ridiculous wish of having a pretty brooch no matter how. Neither did I colour my answer to the request, but very simply told the P[rincess] A[nn] S[imonovna] that if her friend was fond of rarities I doubted not but the Shops contain'd several, and as for my hair I gave it being a part of myself as the highest Compliment to those who lov'd me & who made it valuable or not by their affection for me.

Our Journey goes on well, but the entire views at right & left are unbroken expances of Snow, & Snow falls without Ceasing. We stop as seldom as possible & are cover'd up in our Kibitkees.

*Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> [February]*

" Arena grows worse. I almost fear that I shall not be able to get her on to Petersburg, and what a stroke that would be both for her & for me. As I travel with Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff, I have but one Laquay, so that I have not a Creature to leave with Areena, & know not how I should have her convey'd either to Petersburg or back to Moscow. This is a bad beginning of my Journey. I am myself well thank God, in health, but Gen<sup>l</sup> L. is ill, one of the Men Servants is ill, M<sup>me</sup> L. is not over well, so we are a pretty Society of invalids.

The environs of Twer appear to be pretty. The roads are execrable but our weather today was very fine, & as we continued travelling till near 11 at Night I saw one of the brilliant Night skys which I admire so much. 'tis now near 3 o'clock in the Morn<sup>g</sup> and we are reposing in the House of some fair Roskolnicks at Vishnee Volostok. Their room is all adorn'd with embroyder'd towels.

*Thursday [1<sup>st</sup> March]*

" After a Parlor & a Kitchen Consultation yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup> one of the Servants of Gen<sup>l</sup> L. tore the lining of his Great Coat which by good luck was Scarlet Cloath, powder'd it over with Chalk, & apply'd it to Areena's Knee as a last resource against leaving her

behind which went to my heart & w<sup>ch</sup> would have almost kill'd her with grief. This is a Sympathetic Cure for an Erysepelis & in reality her Knee is much better, so that I have every hope of being able to get her on to Petersburg. By the by the Man who ty'd the bandage on her Knee & who is an Under Officer in Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff's Reg<sup>t</sup> was Courier to the Emperour & is a very fine handsome Young Man. Mem : Gen<sup>l</sup> L. gave him a beating yesterday which nearly prevented his being able to eat his Supper from the Soreness of his teeth & jaws poor fellow, & all because he did not arrive a long enough time before him at the Station which he was prevented from doing by the fault of the Horses. Gen<sup>l</sup> L. is a very Deamon of Severity & deals about his blows with such generosity that I wonder how he has a tooth or a jaw or a whole bone in his service.

By the by we met a Servien<sup>1</sup> Priest at our very first Station from Moscow, a handsome creature who had come from Petersburg & was going to Vienna. He spoke Russ, & told us the news & opinion of the day which seem'd to be a general condemnation of Eng<sup>d</sup> for holding out the War against the Continent combin'd.

*Friday [2<sup>nd</sup> March]*

*12 o'clock at Night. NOVOGOROD*

" I am exhausted with fatigue. Our journey of today has been longer than usual. The Village where we slept last night is call'd Zimagoria & is not remarkable for anything that I know of except an old Vasoke or carriage on Skaites of which I became a most unwilling purchaser. My Kibitkee being smash'd to peices & very heavy into the bargain, it was judg'd advisable to give it & 35 roubles for the Vasoke in question which resembles so ludicrously to a Cage for transporting Fowls to market that Arena & I when once pack'd up in it have no other appearance than that of luckless Poultry preparing for Slaughter. It makes its way however extremely well. A few spots of Country we pass thro' are picturesque, but in general flat & uninteresting. Besides all is cover'd with Snow. Mem : Conjugal felicity 5 weeks after a Wedding.

<sup>1</sup> Serbian.

ST. PETERSBURGH. *Monday. 5<sup>th</sup> March*

"From Novogorod we set out early on Saturday Morning, drove full speed, saw nothing worth noting, & arriv'd at the Hotel of London nearly opposite to the Imperial Pallace & overlooking the Grand Parade at 2 o'clock Sunday Morn<sup>g</sup>. I don't think I ever felt so fatigued in all my life. Thanks to Gen<sup>l</sup> L's *fists & horsewhip* & their renown on the road we suffer'd no delay on the score of Horses. The road was much better than during the first few days' journey, & we came the 180 Versts from Novogorod most prosperously. We slept till 7 in the Morn<sup>g</sup> when the bustle of Soldiers & Horses under our windows awoke us. The preparations for the *Wachtch* Parade begun. At about 10 o'clock it began, & the display of Soldiers, their dresses, all new, &c. &c. &c. is really a most magnificent *coup d'oeuil*. M<sup>me</sup> Loptoff & I went out & stood on the Boulevard to see it to more advantage. The Emperour rode all along the line & is so excessively like the prints which are sold of him in all the Shops that it is impossible not to know him at once. The G<sup>d</sup> Duke Constantine<sup>1</sup> was also there with his Houlans & their tremendous feathers.

I wrote a note to Countess de Worontzow announcing my arrival. She immediately sent her Carriage for me, & at about 2 o'clock I bid adieu to Gen<sup>l</sup> & M<sup>me</sup> de Loptoff and came *here* to occupy a pretty little suite of Apartments which Countess W. had prepared for me. She is a perfectly well bred Woman, *Elegant* in her House & Establishment which is mounted & maintain'd in the most liberal gentlewomanlike footing possible. Her reception of me was affectionate & elegant, but the fate that hangs over my Journey is really remarkable. Almost at the same minute I enter'd St<sup>t</sup> Petersb. Col<sup>l</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen, Lord Royston, & a M<sup>r</sup> Halliday quitted it on their way to Lebow where a Ship waits there

<sup>1</sup> Grand Duke Constantine (1779-1831), son of Czar Paul I and Empress Maria Feodorovna. Was one of the worst Russian generals in the war against Napoleon. After the peace he received the command of the troops in Poland, and on his marriage with a Polish lady he renounced his claims to the Imperial throne. He was, however, proclaimed Emperor on his brother Alexander I's death in 1825 by a revolutionary section of the Russian Liberals known as the Decembrists, but the conspiracy was speedily suppressed by his younger brother who became Czar as Nicholas I. He was violent, ill-tempered and cruel and his first wife, who was a princess of Saxe-Coburg and a maternal aunt of Queen Victoria, was forced to leave him on this account in 1801.

arrival to conduct them to a Port of Sweden. The ship has been purchased by Lord Royston & freighted by him ; he has obtain'd permission to mann it with English Sailors ; in short the Energy of his Character has shewn itself upon the occasion, he has overcome every difficulty, & I hope with all my heart that escaping every danger he may arrive safely in England in a few weeks' time. The Countess Worontzow receives Company every Evening. His lovely sister, the Princess Gallitzen, call'd here before dinner. On how beautiful She is. In the Eve<sup>g</sup> I saw M<sup>r</sup> Cavanagh, cheerful agreeable minded creature. He confirm'd to me all the Circumstances I mention. When I went to the Countess's Apartments I found them brilliant with lights and a blazing fire in the Chimney. The House is very much in the Style of an elegant English House, Carpets on the floors &c. &c. &c. &c. . . . We did not go to bed till 2 in the Morning.

*Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> [March]*

" I am still in all the misery of uncertainty on the subject of going to Eng<sup>d</sup> or not. A new & very excellent method of going presents itself with the Ambassador of Sweden who is to have a Frigate from his own Country not being able to obtain a pass by Land, tho' the Emperour of Russia has a very particular esteem for his person. He is a most respectable old man of 60. I had made up my mind to stay. These Changes are agony to me. I have *no* letter from Moscow which is terrible torment to me likewise.

Yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup> I call'd on old M. de Poliansky, on M<sup>me</sup> Ribaupier, & on Baroness Hogier. With the old man I had half an hour's *tête à tête*, talking russ all the time ; I found him greatly chang'd. I call'd on the Loptoffs likewise & found them dress'd out going to a Dinner. I walk'd at least 4 Versts, that is first up & down the Quay, & then to M. Poliansky's. Today the Cold Wind which blows from all points of the Compass is terrible. M. Cavanagh has been here, & D<sup>r</sup> Rogerson who I saw again with great pleasure & who is grown a beauty instead of an old Man. He was enchanted to see me, & has shewn a singular degree of goodnature & indeed of warm friendship towards me. Countess W. is very unwell ; her chest seems affected. We spend the Evenings in her Cabinet. 2 French Officers in the Russian Service spent yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup> here—le Chevalier Vornieg, & le Comte

Rostgniac. The youngest of the two, M. le Comte, is the most insupportable prateroast I ever heard—he is call'd '*aimable*'.

Countess Worontzow having written to Count Romanzoff, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to ask for a passport for me to Sweden, he sent to request I would call on him at five o'clock. Accordingly at five o'clock I repair'd to his House & on my announcing my name I was at once receiv'd & shewn upstairs, led thro' a suite of Apartments, & at length rec'd in a small one by a Lady whose appearance bespoke nothing remarkable in any way; a good old mild Woman, & that's all. She receiv'd me as if prepared for my visit, talk'd of the Princess & of myself in a Fatherly Motherly way. In short before our Conversation had time to flag the Minister himself appear'd. His *Courtesy* & *Courum* are it seems notorious, & indeed as visiting qualitys never were any more agreeable. Count Romanzoff is a man of past 50, a Courtier & more remark'd for his urbanity than for anything else. When I ask'd him for my Passport he was full of offer of service, told me he had communicated my Case & the Princess's Letter to the Emperour, & that his Imperial Majesty had order'd that no difficulty should be thrown in my way. He spoke to me of the possibility of going with the Ambassador of Sweden. In short he seem'd to espouse my Cause *as if he had been the Mother that bore me*. Encourag'd by his manners I ask'd him whether, from the circumstance of my having been recommended to both the Empresses, I could according to Princess Daschkaw's wish be presented to their Imperial Majestys as a mark of my sensibility of their goodness. His answer was an affirmative, & on my saying that perhaps the circumstances of the moment might occasion some difficulty he told me a story of L<sup>d</sup> Douglas's having ask'd the same thing & in a word the Emperour's begging leave to postpone to another season the interview. But charging himself unask'd to undertake the commission, he ended by requesting that for anything in which he could be of service to me I would address myself to him in preference to any one else. He took my address promising to call on me, conducted me to the door after I had embrac'd the Lady I have already mention'd, & so ended my visit. When I recounted it to Countess W & her beautiful sister Gallitzen I learnt that the Lady I had seen was a M<sup>me</sup> Narishkin with all the Honours & Ornaments a Court can bestow.



Soon after Le Chevalier Vornieg arriv'd. He play'd Chess with the Young Count & talk'd of the Swedish Frigate & lost his game & attributed his being Checkmate to the Swedish Frigate, & in a word resign'd the field hoping I would revenge his quarrel, since I was the cause of his losing it by the Swedish Frigate. (He has been commission'd to ask for a place for me on board.) I play'd a game but was beat likewise. M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>me</sup> Sablokoff (she was Miss Angerstein the great English Banker's daughter) came to supper. Her exterior does not please me at all, 'tis large, boney & inelegant; her voice is course, & her teeth long. But her conversation may be pleasing & she appears mild.<sup>1</sup> There was some question of her learning russ, & her Husband's remark was that her learning it was totally useless, as it could be of no use to her except to speak to the servants. N.B. There's a Eulogium on National language or rather the National pride. . . .

*Wednesday [7<sup>th</sup> March]*

"I woke with a new plan this Morn<sup>g</sup> which I communicated to Countess W. as soon as I cou'd. It was that of going myself to the Ambassador of Sweden, asking him at once whether I could have a place on board his Frigate, & in short seeing my way & judging accordingly. I therefore wrote to him to ask for an interview which was instantly granted by the Baron de Steding with the utmost politeness & 7 o'clock in the Eve<sup>g</sup> the hour named.

In the meantime M<sup>me</sup> Poliansky call'd on me & we went together to the Hermitage. She is acquainted with every nook & corner of it, & I saw it in perfection. I had seen it once before & recollected some of the Appartments, but it is embellish'd & besides I merely was led thro' it at full galop the last time. . . . In passing one of the Appartments we met the little Grand Duke Nicholas.<sup>2</sup> We stopt & as he pass'd made our curtseys. He is a child of 10 or 11, very like the G<sup>d</sup> Duke Constantine. In passing another we thought we heard a repetition of a Concert, but on coming into the room it was a Clock which was so constructed as to play a Concerto which appear'd to be perform'd by 50 first rate

<sup>1</sup> Juliana, only daughter of John Julius Angerstein (1735-1823), merchant, philanthropist, and art connoisseur.

<sup>2</sup> Grand Duke Nicholas (1796-1855), son of Czar Paul I and Empress Maria Feodorovna, later Czar Nicholas I.

musicians. It was most enchanting & really like Magic, the Music full harmonious & brilliant, & on approaching it it was Fairy Elves who wellcom'd your approach by their invisible ministry. In another room I saw Mr Porter's painting of Peter the Great.<sup>1</sup> It is a very fine work tho' not perfectly equal to my expectations. I have seen more pleasing portraits of him at different places & think that which Princess Daschkaw gave to the Empress Dowager was much more so. There is not enough of dignity in this one in my opinion, but it is a very fine portrait notwithstanding. It is not placed where it is intended to be & that may produce a great difference in its effect. . . .

I was excessively tired with the Day & felt ill disposed for my Assigination with the Ambassador of Sweden. However I dress'd myself in M<sup>me</sup> Poliansky's dressing room & at 7 o'clock hasten'd to him. He was alone as I had requested in my note & came forward to meet me. He is a Man of near 70, bright with Cleanliness, & of a most sweet amiable address. Tea was brought in & in 10 minutes time Baron Steding & I were seated *tête à tête* drinking our tea & talking as if we had been old acquaintances. I made my request to him & he at once granted it, at the same time gave me his reasons for leaving his Wife & Daughter behind which convincing me that I could not with perfect propriety accompany him, I withdrew my claim & immediately decided to go back to Moscow. . . . Soon after I took my leave, after promising to send a packet of letters from me to my Family which he most kindly undertook to take. . . .

*Friday [9<sup>th</sup> March]*

"Seal'd & sent my Letters to the Post Office, was too late, was scolded by that excellent Dr Rogerson, & then put in the way of sending them by an Estafet which I would rather have paid 100 roubles than miss'd doing. As the letters to my beloved Princess were calculated to give her the highest consolation & the Letters which I have rec<sup>d</sup> from her & from Anna Petrovna by this day's

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Ker Porter (1777-1842), painter and traveller. In 1804 he was appointed historical painter to the Czar and painted a number of pictures for the Hermitage Museum and the Admiralty Hall at St. Petersburg. His *Travelling Sketches in Russia and Sweden* appeared in 1809 and he later published further accounts of his travels. In 1812 he married Princess Mary Scherbatoff after many difficulties.

post prove the dear woman has need of some, they are even of a nature that would have made me hesitate had I resolv'd to go.

At 12 o'clock I went with the Princess Mary Scherbatoff to Tischbein a Painter, a German artist, who is drawing her picture which she intends sending to M<sup>r</sup> Porter. His Style is very soft & very pleasing; his resemblances sometimes at least are very happy, for I had scarcely enter'd the room when I was struck by that of the G<sup>d</sup> Duchess Katherine, tho' I had only seen her passing by in her Carriage the day before yesterday. This Painter occupys the lower Appartments of D<sup>r</sup> Kriton's House. D<sup>r</sup> K. is Physician to the Imperial Family & greatly celebrated here for his skill. M<sup>rs</sup> K. is full of talent I'm told she paints & draws in the most superiour Style, and as a Musician, a Wife, & a Mother she is equally celebrated as excelling in each character. She came down to see the P. Mary. Her appearance does not exactly announce all this. I was introduc'd to her & she to me.<sup>1</sup>

L<sup>d</sup> Somerton has been making a fool of himself. When meeting the Emperour he has not taken off his hat as every Creature does. M<sup>me</sup> Vraskee came fresh from the Perspective where she walk'd with L<sup>d</sup> S. a few days ago & told us a long story which it appears was not exactly true. However 'tis certain he thinks it a mark of *spirit* to act with rudeness, & 'tis equally certain he may involve both himself and his countrymen in a scrape if he continues. I have requested Princess Mary S. to speak to him about it. . . .

. . . . .  
*Thursday [17<sup>th</sup> March]*

"... I call'd on Princess M. Scherbatoff who is unwell. She is alone occupied about M<sup>r</sup> Porter, & it must be own'd that one's Lover in Eng<sup>d</sup> at the present moment without any possibility of receiving news from him is not over cheering. . . .

. . . . .  
*Saturday [19<sup>th</sup> March]*

"I had some trouble to obtain a Padarogna (or permission from the Government to have Post Horses) last night. My passports being ask'd for & I having left them with M. Tutelman the Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> at Moscow who demanded them as a matter of form before I quitted the town, he had given me a *billet* which

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 178.

order'd that I should not be stopt between Moscow & Petersburg. Countess W. wrote an assurance of my being a British Subject, Count Romantzoff wrote a civil letter. At length Prince Lobanoff granted me my Padarogna, & I intended to set out at 5 in the Morn<sup>g</sup>, but M<sup>r</sup> Cavanagh would not hear of it & insisted on my waiting till 12 in order to get a Certificate from M<sup>r</sup> Shairp the British Consul. I took his advice of course & did not get off till 2 o'clock after 2 visits from that most excellent M<sup>r</sup> Cavanagh & paying one to Baron & Baroness Hoggier, the former of whom I delight in & his rib I cannot endure. Countess W. is still unwell. She had order'd a basket of provisions for me & paid the utmost attention to every thing. She is a very respectable Woman, but there is a something of *Caution* about her which repels rather in the very midst of attention & Kindness. Her beautiful sister is more engaging & so is her charming son.

Michel the self sufficient Valet de Chamber who attended me play'd me a rogue's trick at last about Horses. He made me pay tremendously for those he hired & they proved to be tired before I set out, so that the first 30 versts were made with infinite labour. Besides the Postillion was near taking me to Poland. He turn'd to the right at Tzarskoselo & was very near going on, on, Lord know's where, when we met some carts & drivers & heard by accident that they were come from Poland & that we were 2 versts at least out of our road. It was dark before we arriv'd at the first Station & there no Post horses were to be had. Some Mujicks (Peasants) furnish'd us with three at 5 times their value, & I was forced to submit. I had taken my Padroгна for 4 Horses, & another mark of the spirit of imposition amongst those fellows is that at almost every stage from that moment they have try'd to make me take *three* Horses & *pay them for 4*, declaring their three were equal to 4 in value. To this I have not submitted once.

I have gone on Day & Night & intend to do so if possible.

*Tuesday 22<sup>d</sup> March N.S. 1807*

"I am sitting in a little Inn at Yeadrova hung round with Saints & Angels, Virgin Marys, Venus's, Turks, Empresses, cheap Portraits (Originals unknown), Horses and Warriors, English & french prints, looking glasses, Easter Eggs, Images in abundance, a ticking Clock, & a Gonslee which is small to hold in the hand

like a Lyre & exactly such as Guthery has given a print of in the book on russian Antiquitys w<sup>ch</sup> K. has got. The Gonslee or horizontal Harp on which I play is a refinement on the other in which to say the truth its Originality is almost lost. The one I see at present is not a Yard long. I rather think 'tis a Tartar instrument.

I am now 364 Versts from Petersburg & expect to arrive in 2 days and a half at Moscow. My God, how melancholy I feel sometimes. I could have quitted Russia 'tis certain, & that the melancholy acc<sup>ts</sup> given me of the Princess D. is the cause of my return is equally certain. Let what will come of it I should console myself with this idea, that had I quitted her under the impression of her being miserable, had I conceiv'd myself the cause of embittering the latter days of one who loves me as the tenderest Parent could do, had I soon heard of her death, no power on Earth could ever have made me happy. As it is I may have pangs, but the Sacrifice I make brings with itself the Consolation which a Clear Conscience always obtains. This is at least one soothing idea. Had I gone to Eng<sup>d</sup> I could not have receiv'd any intelligence from my friends here, & my imagination would have been cruelly active ; but yet I am a Prisoner in the true sense of the word, tho' the Prisoner of Friendship. Heaven grant us a speedy peace.

My Journey is very tiresome on acc<sup>t</sup> of the bad roads. Never was anything to equal them. My Carriage is broke to atoms, not a single glass remains, & at this moment I am detain'd & have been for nearly two hours to have new Skaites put on my Carriage, the others being broke to atoms. I have gone day & night, & in praise of my sleeping abilities I must add that yesterday my Carriage was broke & mended while I was in a profound Slumber. The State of the roads is indescribable.

I have this moment in the auberge the society of 3 Men travellers who are smoaking, eating & drinking. M. Evashkin, *ci-devant Maître de Police* at Moscow, pass'd likewise. I sent to speak to him, & heard from him that he left the Princess very well. I sent a letter by him to Countess Worontzow. Here come the 2 beggar Women to ask my 3 newly arriv'd travellers for money for the Christening of a new born infant. They have already got money from me, & the Master of the post tells me that that infant has been born & christen'd every day *these 4 years*. . . .

*Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> [March]*

" Oh the torments of travelling in Russia even on the high road between Petersburg & Moscow. The impositions, the difficulty of obtaining Horses even at a great price. No, there is nothing for it but Gen<sup>l</sup> Loptoff's Cuffs & Cudgels ; whenever was he detain'd five minutes ? Terror sets them all jumping in his service & nothing else animates them ; & when they do impose on a more peaceable order of travellers & get his money, the only visible effect is a few Drunkards the more, for Comfort is out of the question. . . .

*Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> [March]. Moscow*

" At 2 o'clock yesterday I arriv'd ; & were it possible to feel perfect happiness in these cruel cruel times, I ought to do so in the unfeign'd affection of my best beloved Princess & that of every Creature in the House. The Princess flew to meet me at the hall door & burst into a flood of tears, she folded me in her Maternal arms with extacy that was nearly painful. I was as much affected as she was. We then came into the Music room, & there I saw one by one Anna Petrovna & the three M<sup>lle</sup> Kotchetoffs. They were almost frantic with delight crying & laughing by turns. Indeed it was impossible to paint affection in Stronger Colours. That blessed Mashinka too. No never was such a Child as she is, dear little Angel.

I never saw anything so affecting as my beloved Princess. My departure had been regretted as the *death* of a Person dearer to her than anything on earth. My return was happiness which She scarcely knew how to comprehend, dear dear Woman. Anna Petrovna told me that there was not a day she did not kiss & bathe with tears the Gloves she had taken with my name written on them. Yesterday she shew'd me them, told me she had kiss'd them a hundred times for my sake & then gave them back to me. Never will I wear them after all the affection & all the Sentiment they have given rise to ; I will keep them as a Talisman of affection. There was not a Creature in the House to whom this dear Princess did not make a present to rejoice in my return, her Nieces, Polagai Constantinovna, the Princess Anne S. Daschkaw, all the Servants, in a word *everybody* ; & to give me a Fête more worthy as she say'd of her & me than balls or Fandangoes She

releas'd from a long imprisonment five debtors & gave me their happiness to recompence me for the happiness my return gave her. . . .

*Monday 28<sup>th</sup> [March]*

“ On waking Saturday Morning I found myself fatigued to a degree I had no conception of, I could scarcely stir & had such violent pains in my bones, particularly in my back (having lain in bed during all the Journey), that I could not draw my breath without agony & shrieking sometimes from Pain. I was recommended to try the effect of a Russ Bath & therefore wrote to request M<sup>me</sup> Nebalsine would allow me to use hers, and Yesterday Morning I repair'd there accompanied by Areena who provided all Necessarys, such as Soap, Honey & Salt, a rod made of the bark of the birch tree split into a number of stripes, &c. &c. &c. After paying a visit to the Lady of the Mansion I retir'd to her Bath which was reasonably heated, & as usual a Staircase & flat space on the top to lye on to perspire. I was resolv'd to be cured *à la Russe* since I began, & after common ablutions I mounted the Staircase, lay on the flat space & had my dislocated bones rub'd with honey & salt. This opens the pores to a dangerous degree unless particular care is taken to avoid cold. Suddenly Areena threw Water upon heated bricks & a vapour incircled me, so warm & so weakening that I could scarcely resist falling fast asleep. I would not suffer her to increase it to the degree she wish'd from not being able to support more. After stewing quarter of an hour in this way the rod was brought, was soap'd, was warm'd, & I was rub'd & tap'd by turns. At length I went into a great Cistern & so ended the Story, except that I had been weaken'd to such an excess that I gladly threw myself on the bed prepared in the adjoining room, & in half an hour after drank tea offer'd me by attendant Nymphs, of which by the by there were at least 14.

This operation lasted till near 6 o'clock in the Eve<sup>g</sup>. The Princess began to grow uneasy & sent a Servant to enquire what had happened. That most excellent M<sup>lle</sup> Lilinthale came down stairs to sit by my bed & converse. She is more deaf than ever, but I believe a more Angelic minded being does not exist & her Courage & cheerfulness of Nature bears her up thro' every tryal. Her mind is highly Cultivated & her understanding of a very

superiour order. I went to M<sup>me</sup> Nebalsin's room for a moment to bid her adieu & then hurried home & spent the greater part of the Eve<sup>s</sup> on my bed, the Princess in my room & the Cousins fair whose affection is unbounded.

Today I feel better. I beg'd the Princess to let her 4 Nieces go and dine with their Aunt & Shop & that she could dine in my room. This she consented to. After she quitted me I reposed & read Paul & Virginia in Italian, then slept, then rec<sup>d</sup> the visits of all the House, heard the Story of the Day, & found that Anna Petrovna had spent *her present* in purchasing a silver tea Pot & Coffee Pot on which she intends to inscribe the date & Day of my return.

*Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1808*

“Dined downstairs & felt as if a hundred years had pass'd since I had quitted Moscow. I had had such a multitude of plans, wishes, uncertaintys, hopes, alarms, that my mind has had more employment in one short month than it could have in a Year of Monotonous life.

*Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> [April]*

“I have been incapable of writing or thinking of anything but the horrible Catastrophe of the Ship purchas'd by Lord Royston, —it is lost together with almost every passenger on board. M<sup>r</sup> Haws sent me to M<sup>r</sup> Divoff's <sup>1</sup> where we dined last tuesday a copy of the letter rec<sup>d</sup> from Memel on the subject, by which it appears that having cross'd from Lebau to Carlsrona in Sweden in a very short time they could not land on account of the ice. In the mean time a violent tempest arose, & the Cap<sup>tn</sup> instead of Keeping the open sea made for the coast of Prussia & let the Ship run on the

<sup>1</sup> Adrian Ivanowich Divoff, Privy Councillor, was married to Countess Elizabeth Buturlin (1762-1813), daughter of Count Peter Buturlin and Princess Daschkaw's sister Countess Maria Woronzow. M<sup>me</sup>. Divoff was “une grande intrigante” and amongst others with whom she had affairs were the Swedish regent Duke of Sudermania and the famous Italian tenor singer Mandini. Her youngest daughter was so stung on one occasion by her mother reproaching her with her illegitimate birth that she immediately withdrew from society and embraced the Roman Catholic faith. M. Divoff died a year after his wife.



Sandbank. She began immediately to fill with water. M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen & a M<sup>rs</sup> Barns with 2 Children (after her having seen the third & its Nurse wash'd overboard) were placed for security in a sort of wooden tent on Deck, the Sea rolling over them continually. Lord Royston, Col<sup>l</sup> Pollen & 2 other persons got in the mean time into the Ship's boat in order to try & make Land to obtain assistance. They had scarcely launch'd the boat when it was upset & every one of them lost. A M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Caley who I had seen at Petersburg the day he obtain'd his Passport exulting in his good-fortune was likewise wash'd overboard & drown'd. The Cap<sup>tn</sup> & 2 Sailors got into the Life boat & gain'd the Shore, but of the 2 Sailors one died & a second had his legs frozen. The life boat made repeated but unsuccessful attempts to reach the Ship again, nor did she receive any assistance for 36 hours when miraculous to say M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen & M<sup>rs</sup> Barns & her 2 Children were found alive tho' suffering in the manner I describe without food, wet to the Skin, perishing with Cold, & all the agony of having seen a husband & a Child perish before their eyes. M<sup>r</sup> John Halliday, a M<sup>r</sup> Pereira & a few others were saved, but M<sup>r</sup> Pereira tho' a very healthy Strong Young Man died soon after he reached the Shore ; & heaven only knows whether that charming M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen will have Strength to survive such accumulated Misery.

Heavenly God, when one figures to themselves the idea of that brilliant fine Creature Col<sup>l</sup> Pollen such as we saw him here a few Months ago, & then turns to the Gulph which was ready to Close upon him while brilliant with beauty & full of life, surrounded with a sort of atmosphere which excited & created gladness wherever he appear'd, one shrinks from the belief of such agonizing truths. Col<sup>l</sup> P. had been oblig'd to absent himself from Eng<sup>d</sup> for some years for debt. There remain'd but one, after which leases were to expire & he was to have liv'd at home. That year he had intended to pass in Russia, but this hapless War forc'd him to alter his plan & seek refuge in Sweden. The fatal termination of all his hopes freezes my blood. I too have had my plans & have still my hopes, & their object lies beyond the Gulph where his are entomb'd. A merciful Providence has spared me from sharing his fate, for had not my letter to M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen been lost or had not my journey to Petersburg been retarded in the manner it was, there is no doubt but that I should have been amongst the Sufferers.

Yet deeply as this truth affects me, I feel in spight of myself a sentiment of humiliation when I am congratulated on my escape & told that Providence has interfered in my behalf, as if *my* Life or 100 such could be weigh'd in heaven's ballance against *one* such a being as Lord Royston! Virtuous, good, & noble as he was, just entering into the active scenes of life, *his* existence might have animated millions to keep alive the spark of Virtue which still is found on Earth but which fades by the Mediocrity of those whose example leads the Multitude & whose situation makes that Example Conspicuous.

Lord Royston would probably have been a Statesman or a Soldier. In any situation in life he must have been an *honour* to his Country; & a hundred times in listening to circumstances of his Conduct which served to Shew the Man, I have felt as if Eng<sup>d</sup> would count him amongst her Hero's & owe him a Day of Glory! He was a Young Man of so superiour a cast, he was a Creature one feels so proud to call Countryman that I never heard his name without exultation & shall never hear it pronounc'd again without a pang of deep regret—yet I never beheld him but once. But there are circumstances & times when to be good & great is to confer obligations on every one who feels a sentiment of Patriotism. Oh what must be the anguish of his unhappy family! Lord Hardwicke, his Father, idoliz'd him, he was occupied about him continually, & even wrote to the Bankers here (M<sup>r</sup> Rowand & M<sup>r</sup> Haws) in a style that would have made them exert every interest & strain every nerve in his behalf. Lord Royston's journey had improvement of mind & instruction for its object much more than pleasure. I'm told that his manner of relating all that he had seen & all the hairbreath escapes he had had was highly interesting. Oh I will talk no more of him. The Story of his life would be but short; he was scarcely two & twenty, but even that short life unfolded Virtues which make him a public as well as a private loss & makes his melancholy fate an event ever ever to be regretted.

M<sup>rs</sup> Barns (another of the ill fated passengers) is frozen terribly & it was suppos'd for some time that both her remaining Children must die of all they suffer'd during the storm. I have rec<sup>d</sup> a letter from M<sup>r</sup> Cavanagh, giving me an account of her distress'd situation. She is the daughter of an Admiral Preston. She married an English Merchant & in consequence of his failure & absence

from Russia she finds herself dependent on the support of her Country people. By their aid she had arranged matters so as to be able to follow her husband to Eng<sup>d</sup>. The War forced her to abandon her design of going to Abo & so to Stockholm, & getting as far as Wiburg she was forced to return. Under those circumstances the Ship at Libau appear'd to her a blessing sent from Heaven. She hasten'd to it & is now more destitute than ever in an enemy's Country. I'm told that the Empress Elizabeth & the Empress Mother have each sent her 500 roubles.<sup>1</sup>

*Friday May the 1<sup>st</sup> O.S. 1808. 12<sup>th</sup> N.S.*

" Respecting the unfortunate survivors of the Shipwreck I have heard that M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen is gone with M<sup>r</sup> John Halliday who is recover'd to Konigsberg where it seems they will be able to embark

<sup>1</sup> The following details of the shipwreck are contained in a note-book written many years afterwards by Martha Wilmot (then Mrs Bradford). They have been communicated to the editors through the kindness of Mrs Evelyn Marindin.

" A curious circumstance occurred in the beginning of the year 1808 at the time of the shipwreck in which Lord Royston and Coll Pollen were lost which if related in a Romance might be thought too fanciful.

The ship, the passengers, the property (I might add amongst other things a beautiful little box made of precious stones given me by P<sup>ss</sup> D[aschkaw] containing a sapphire a Turquoise, an Amethyst and a small Opal, all set in large diamonds which L<sup>d</sup> Royston was bringing home to my family), all were lost with the exception of M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen, M<sup>rs</sup> Barnes, her Nurse and child, M<sup>r</sup> Haliday and I believe one Sailor who were saved I know not how and taken into some House where by degrees they were returned to consciousness. Nothing, absolutely nothing, from the wreck was found ; but the lives of those I mention being spared seem'd a miracle in itself. All else was given up as hopeless when after some days a poor man who had been grubbing in the sand brought what he call'd a string of glass beads nearly covered with mud and sand, and a wooden box nailed down. The first proved to be a diamond watch chain which the Empress Catherine had given to M<sup>r</sup> Haliday's father at the time she was Innoculated for the small pox either by him or D<sup>r</sup> Rogerson—I forget which but both were present. The box contained a casket in which was a certificate of M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen's marriage. This was a document of great importance to her, as she was coming to England for the first time after her marriage to which Col. Pollen's family had objected so strongly that without the certificate her situation would have been painfully awkward and embarrassing. She was a very charming woman, and I am told was afterwards much esteem'd by Col. Pollen's family.

The anecdote was told me by M<sup>r</sup> Haliday himself when in the month of October of the same year 1808 he was again shipwreck'd in the Gulph of Finland and I was on board with him.

M. BRADFORD (WILMOT)."

in a ship now there. It seems that Lord Royston did not embark in the Ship he had purchas'd, 20 Sailors & Captains of Ships for whom he had obtain'd passports having been stopt at a little Village before they reach'd Libau & detain'd there, he hired a Lubecker the Capt<sup>n</sup> of which is suppos'd to have been extremely ignorant. In short the die is cast & they are long since at peace, while *we* are struggling in the fearful ocean of Life, gazing on lowering Clouds & tempests which may soon engulf us heaven only knows how.

I think as little as I can of those things & devote my time to the acquirement of Italian & to Sign<sup>r</sup> Monskeety my singing Master. My dancing Master has forsaken me, he is gone to the Country, but I have learnt one dance from him which will appear most *outlandish* and diverting to my family, if I have ever the happiness of being reunited to them in health & spirits. I also occupy myself with a little garden. 'tis a corner of the Yard under the windows of the little Divan & those of my *ci-devant* Gonslee apartment which the Princess has given me to cultivate as I please. I have appointed Kasma my gardener. We have rail'd it in & planted several lilac trees, some flower roots, & sown some seeds. I root these very frequently & take a great interest in it, tho' we are to go to Troitska in 14 Days.

Moscow 29<sup>th</sup> May 1808

" I have today had a most unexpected happiness, a letter from my beloved Father! I had not receiv'd a line from home for 9 Months and had not form'd a hope of receiving one during the continuance of war between England & Russia. This blessed letter brings me the most cheering news I could have heard, Edward's return home in safety from Sicily. Oh would to God I too was safely at home! There are moments when my very soul sickens at the uncertainty of my fate, but my father's letter gives me great Consolation on that subject. 'tis clear that my Family have form'd no expectations of my return & consequently they are spared all disappointment upon the subject. This is to me a most tranquilizing idea as the fear of the contrary was one of the principal sources of my uneasiness.

TROITSKOE. *June 6<sup>th</sup> 1808*

"... The Princess is very unwell. Both her feet are swell'd to a terrible degree & give her great pain. We have not a human being to consult what is necessary to apply to them & are afraid to try experiments. We quitted Moscow on Saturday last 30<sup>th</sup> May & arriv'd here on Sunday Eve<sup>g</sup> after travelling all night. 'tis possible the fatigue of the journey may have been of disservice to the princess. She has felt the pain violently since thursday & imagines it is a rhumatism.

*Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> June*

"... To return to the few last days of our Stay at Moscow. We were several times in the society of that Charming Young woman Countess Orloff. She paid 2 long visits to us & we dined once with her. Her house, establishment &c. &c. &c. are the same as during her Father's lifetime, but tho' she has *the World at her feet* such is the preposterous fortune which she inherits, yet her prudence of conduct and sweetness of disposition keep her surrounded by respectable old relations & young girls who have been educated with her. Her *bonne* (a child's Maid & nothing more) accompanys her almost every where, & the good old woman who has lived with her from the day of her birth exists but in her adoration of her. She does unbounded acts of charity & is as generous as 'tis possible to be, but those things are to be expected under the Circumstances. What renders her delightful is the modesty & dignity of her Conduct & the sweetness of her disposition in the interiour of her family. In a word to pay her the best compliment I can I yield that She *deserves to be poor*. She ought to receive other sort of tribute than that which £40,000 a year is sure to receive without the aid of a single good quality of heart or head. We met her another day at her Aunt Countess Ivan Orloff's. This old Lady is the Widow of the eldest brother of the Orloffs.<sup>1</sup> He had had an intrigue with her Mother. The beldame grown old in iniquity, not chusing to lose her influence in the Orloff family, employed stratagem to render her daughter (who was beautiful) the Mistress of Count Ivan. She was in every respect

<sup>1</sup> Count Ivan Orloff (1733-1791), captain in the Preobragensky Guards, married Mlle. Elizabeth Rtichteff. Unlike his brothers he took practically no part in public affairs.

the opposite of her Mother, but it was not till a tryal of 10 years that he consented to marry her, tho' much his superiour in birth & everything else. At her House we met the only surviving Brother (I believe) Count Wolodimir.<sup>1</sup> He is married to a Livonian Lady, M<sup>lle</sup> de Shtakleberg. It is he who was director of the Academy of Sciences before Princess Daschkaw. He does not share the beauty for which three of his brothers were so remarkable, he has a crooked mouth & a *waggish* look as if he expected to be laugh'd at whenever he speaks. I'm told his conversation generally produces what he expects.

Another personage who figured there was a Fool deck'd out with towering plumes of feathers & hung over with so many ornaments that she was enough to put to the blush those who wore any. In fact she was the first to find out a resemblance between herself & M<sup>me</sup> Bakmeteff (*ci-devant* M<sup>lle</sup> [istrejss] to Count Alexis Orloff) who affects to dress in the Moldavian Costume & of course wears a small plume of black feathers in the front of her turban.<sup>2</sup> She pointed her out & say'd to Alexandre Kotchetoff 'Cousin why don't you dress with taste? You see that M<sup>me</sup> B. & I are like Queens. *We* wear feathers always and look like sisters.' The point of the fool's remark was not lost on the listeners & made me discover some of the back biters of M<sup>me</sup> B. who think her affected for wearing the Moldavian dress which nobody else wears & who probably have other grudges against her. This Lady who is not above 40 has still a great share of beauty. She was married young, & in a very high rank of life. She quitted her husband (a woman's fortune in Russia is always at her disposal) & attach'd herself to Count Alexis O[rloff] who she accompanied into Germany where he was forc'd to reside during the reign of Paul the 1<sup>st</sup>. There was no colouring cast on this act, but on her return with him & his daughter she took her former place in society, liv'd in a small house close by his, & frequently accompany'd his family in her excursions to the Country &c. &c. &c. &c. The young Countess treated her politely but banish'd familiarity with her. Since her

<sup>1</sup> Count Vladimir Orloff (1743-1831), youngest of the five Orloff brothers. General in the Russian army, Court Chamberlain, and formerly Director of the Academy of Sciences. He married Elizabeth, daughter of M. Ivan Stackelberg.

<sup>2</sup> Marie Bakmeteff, daughter of Prince Simon Lvov and wife of M. Peter Bakmeteff.

father's death she has given her 100,000 roubles—at a modest valuation this is £15,000—and what is remarkable & painful in the highest degree she has purchased one of Prince Daschkaw's Estates which has been sold to pay part of his debts. Formerly at Court the Princess's fortune and favour were often injur'd by the family of O[rloff], & now she has the mortification to see the principal estate of her son & one where several of the family are bury'd (which renders the mortification double) fall into the possession of the Mistress of the Man who was her Enemy.

Till lately it was consider'd nearly impious to sell a property on which reposed the remains of one's Ancestors, so that a Shadow of the Sentiment is almost universal to the present hour, & in most familys every Estate however beautiful is parted with before *that* where the bones of the forefathers are laid. Besides the family Church, in which are images hung over with offerings where vanity, hope, fear, gratitude have by turns deck'd the idol, imperceptibly enchain the affections till the ties become too strong to be master'd. To say the truth all these things are wearing away in the higher ranks, but the dear peasants allow them all in their full force without questioning the sense or folly of the matter, & 'tis well they do for they are as much a part of an Estate as the Church which is built on it. However the progress of refinement has not yet abolish'd images & the vanity attach'd to decking them out in pearls, precious Stones, reliques, & so forth. Even M<sup>lle</sup> Kotchetoff the *demoiselle d'honneur*, after having placed several images in her trunks to convey to Petersburg, was so embarrass'd with an enormous one which could find entrance nowhere that after fuming & fretting we were oblig'd to cover it up apart & stand it behind her in the Coach. Had each of them had an equally preposterous mass of superstition, they could not have found room for themselves. Anna Petrovna is a great lover of these household gods & travels overcharg'd with their weight; her great object is to have a small Cabinet devoted to them with lamps burning before each continually. M<sup>me</sup> Gleboff & several persons of my acquaintance have these kind of Oratoires & their friends enter freely to see the taste, magnificence, devotion & whatever it may be of the possessor. 'tis comical to see men & women devoutly bowing down before one of these pictures set in a massy gold frame, crossing himself, kissing it with reverence &

then familiarly examining its ornaments, criticizing the painting of the face & hands (for the rest of the figure is generally hid between gold & silver) and half deriding the superstitious display & sneering at the next devotee who bows down before it. Most persons I remark who cross themselves suspect they are laugh'd at by those of a different religion & generally laugh themselves even in the moment they perform the mystic symbol, but their jealousy of their faith is not the less strong for their affected or real laugh.

And now to return to our Fool who I left at old Countess Orloff's to whom she belongs. Like Shakespear's Fools she often says very pointed things, is the principal object in a drawing room, sings if she likes & dances about the room if she is in good humour, is call'd 'Fool' (Doura), calls herself her Mistress's Natural Daughter, & says outrageous impertinences if the Maggot bites her. She is dress'd out magnificently & told us the Queen of Prussia had dress'd her head for us to set her off for the Princess. She sat by her while playing cards & stood by her chair part of dinner time, say'd a hundred things, & when tired went & sat down at a side table & eat of what the servants gave her harranguing them by turns. She soon started up & came round to where the young Countess Orloff & I were sitting together, told her She beg'd she would excuse her for comparing herself to her, but it was nevertheless true that they were equally celebrated in Russia, she for her fortune & herself for her beauty. (The Creature is frightful but full of vanity.) In a word her life passes in childish conceits, liberty, restraint (for she is sometimes violent & deals about *hard blows* in her anger) & the place she fills in Society is by no means inconsiderable.

The other persons we met there are not worth naming. Countess Orloff has promised to spend some days here on her way to Kieff. That society awaken'd in Princess D's mind a hundred recollections of former times, but I think she is more animated *in it* than in any other.

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> [June]

"... Alexis our bearded Coachman has engaged my interest to obtain leave for him to marry. The young girl he wishes to espouse is very pretty, but that is the least of the case. He say'd



to me yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup> on our return home on a Droshka with the most sentimental tone of voice imaginable ‘ Mavra Romanovna, I have a favour to ask of you. ’tis to get leave for me to marry. I am very well contented with the princess & feel that she is very kind to me, but last winter my washing cost me very dear, & if I was married I should have my shirts mended & my washing done for nothing & have a corner to myself fix’d.’ After this sentimental appeal to my feelings I could not do less than promise, but I fear he must pay for his shirts & washing one winter more as I don’t find the princess disposed to let him marry for several Months.

Sophia, Anna Petrovna’s Maid, who was betrothed to Affanassey, has had the wisdom to break off the marriage on seeing her Lover stagger drunk three or 4 times & remarking that he beat his fellow servants in his Cups. Had the Marriage taken place Sophia would have become the Princess’s slave & ceas’d to belong to A.P. . . .

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> [June]

“ The Empress Anne was the proudest Woman under the Sun. The Princess mention’d two anecdotes of her a few days ago, one of which is *à propos* & the other *à propos de botte*. So superiour did she conceive herself to the rest of created Mortals that it never occur’d to her that her Subjects existed for any other purpose than *her* amusement or use ; & sympathy, sentiment, or even humanity never enter’d into the question. To be amused she frequently suffer’d the Countess Chernishoff to enter into her private apartments where this lady chatter’d & probably made herself what is most relish’d by those who think themselves above their Species—a buffoon! However the poor Lady was subject to terrible Swellings in her legs & could not stand long without suffering agony. This the Empress knew but not conceiving it possible for her to sit in *her* presence She pass’d unnotic’d all the torture endured by her friend. One day seeing her grow pale & faint with suffering She say’d to her ‘ Listen, thou mayst lean against that table, & Anna Ivanovna (her favorite Waiting Maid) shall stand before thee that I may not *see* thy attitude ’.

Here is the other. The subject of dancing happen’d one day to be mention’d in her presence, and a fancy siez’d her to see the National Dance. She therefore gave orders for the 4 most beauti-

ful Young Woman of distinction that were to be found to come & dance before her. The Choice fell upon the Mother of Princess Daschkaw, the Grand-Mother of Prince Hielkoff, a Lapoukhine & I don't know the 4<sup>th</sup>. As these 4 beautys had never before appear'd in her August presence, all being very young & married to Youthes whose ranks were not yet within the degree She condescended to admit to the glory of kissing her hand, they felt excessively intimidated & soon *puzzled* themselves in the figure of the dance. This so incens'd her Majesty that she gave the Grand-mother of Prince Hielkoff a severe box on her cheek to set matters right, & more dead than alive they still continu'd to figure before her till She order'd the *Sport* to cease.

It is universally believ'd in Russia that the *Fetch* of the Empress Anne was seen for several nights successively seated on the throne with a Crown on her head, & septer in her hand. The Officers of the Guard who first saw it repeated it to others who came the next night & saw it likewise. At length the Circumstance reach'd her ears & at midnight she came & saw herself while the Witnesses saw her & her fetch face to face. In some months after this she died. 'tis Princess Daschkaw who has just told me the anecdote.

*Friday 24<sup>th</sup> [June]*

"... The Orange Lilys have been in blow in the garden since the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. If I recollect right our Irish Orange lilys only blow for the 1st of July to celebrate the battle of the boyne. Vegetation is naturally very rapid here from the sudden changes of weather & short time which Nature has allow'd it. The Lawn has been already mown here & will be mown a second time very soon.

*27<sup>th</sup> June 1808*

"... By the by, if the P. sometimes treats Men as boys (or as Dogs when they don't please her), she often treats Children as Men & Women, expecting the same intelligence & understanding & pursuits which occupy her own mind & putting her own mind into instant competition with theirs. This I have often remark'd, but was particularly struck by it this Eve<sup>g</sup> in her manner with Petrushio who is her Grand Nephew & not yet 14. During the time that she is extracting the substance of a visitor which she does with as much ardour & as *naturally* as a distilling Machine

extracts the essence of Vegetables. Their Age, Sex, or Condition are of no consequence, all good for the Still, & every energy of her mind is at work. But alas she is seldom occupied above three minutes & a half, that time being ample for the purpose in question. This dear child is a bright exception to What I say. This quality of the Princess resembles one which is ascrib'd to Peter the 1<sup>st</sup>. He is say'd to have question'd all ranks & description of persons with singleness of aim and energy, & in this way to have caught flying very precious information & a variety of ideas.

*Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1808*

“ Yesterday M. & M<sup>me</sup> Simonoff arriv'd here to pay their duty to the Princess. M<sup>r</sup> Simonoff is so like all the pictures one sees of Buonaparte that he need not be at the trouble of sitting to a painter in order to procure his portrait. His height & figure is however Manly & Gentlemanlike. The play of his features likewise must differ from that of Buonaparte's, for he is all mildness & sweetness & seems unwilling to interrupt the happiness of a fly much less that of the World, & the penetration of mind impress'd by Nature on all his features seems useful to him only, as it aids him to feel & participate in the sentiments of others. His education has been very commonplace, & I believe he has little Ambition. He married for love at the age of 22, & as he has no protectors I fancy there ends his Story. His Wife was a Princess Ouktoumsky, & as poor as a rat. She is a fair mild good creature & as happy as the days are long, adored by her Husband & taking care of three little children, one of whom she has brought with her here. She is the grand daughter of a Cousin German of the Princess & calls her Great Aunt. Her brother Prince Ouktoumsky, a youth of 19 or at most 20, whose rank in the Army is that of Lieu<sup>t</sup> & such as does not entitle him to put 4 horses to his Carriage tho' call'd 'his Excellence', was married a few weeks before we quitted Moscow to M<sup>lle</sup> Tolstoi, niece to Count Ostrowman, a *Demoiselle d'honneur*, with a very handsome fortune. This is a love match. Both one & the other are Simpletons, but 'tis all a joke for Simpletons fill the World & find their happiness as well as others.

We were at the ball given on the occasion of their Wedding & 2 days after it. The young pair receiv'd the guests at the door

of the first room & rec<sup>d</sup> their expected Compliments of Congratulation. After that almost all, men & women, retired to the bed-chamber which was laid out in state with the Toylet &c. &c. &c. As this appartment is always furnish'd by the bride & the furniture brought in state to the bridegroom's house *after having been bless'd by a priest* it becomes an object of curiosity, and as a matter of course everyone goes to look at it to enquire the price of the laces which trim the toylet table, the rose colour'd satin Curtains, the quilt, the pincushion & large basket all bedizen'd with Knots of rose colour'd ribbon. Men and Women all go, all question, all praise before the bride, all critisize as soon as her back is turn'd, all fly to the looking glass by turns, & all subside in five minutes into the usual routine.

M<sup>me</sup> Noroff who is Aunt to the young Prince Ouktoumsky was dress'd out for the occasion by Princess Gallitzen who ornamented her into a perfect Jeweller's Shop. She had 2 bandeaus of Diamonds, 2 Combs of diamonds, & a sort of Crown of diamonds on her head. Her Earrings of diamonds were magnificent, & on her neck she had Chains of diamonds & strings of pearls, broaches of diamonds, rubys, emeralds & one of a Solitaire worth above £2000. She had a girdle of diamonds fasten'd with an ornament as large as a hen egg. Set in diamonds it look'd like a jewel taken from the treasury of the grand turk ; it was a Stone of a bright Crimzon whose name I don't know. Her white figured satin robe was ornamented with festoons of artificial flowers. Never, no never shall I forget her under her gaudy trappings, but nobody except Kitty can enjoy a description of it. It was a Mingle of childish innocent joy at being so fine, controul'd by the most undisguised fear of the Princess. The mingle of sensation on her mind agitated her to such an excess that no crimzon, no full blown Pioney ever yet equal'd her cheeks.

Her toylet had taken up so much time that she arriv'd late (which she knew was another sin in the Princess's eyes) and the first object on her entrance which struck her dismay'd senses was the princess playing at Boston with three Lords in Stars & Garters. She approach'd her hand. Her own was Kiss'd by the Stars & Garters, for tho' everyone of them knew in their Consciénces that she was a daw in borrow'd plumes, yet such a blaze of diamonds aw'd them, & she herself told me she never had before

rec<sup>d</sup> such a submissive compliment from mortal as she had rec<sup>d</sup> from Mde — a rich relation who generally pass'd her by unnotic'd. This fiery ordeal pass'd she rush'd into the second apartment where I was with the Young people, & flinging herself into my arms with that earnest innocence which nobody has but her she implor'd me to protect her in case the P. should attack her dress for '*Ma bonne amie, ma chère Mavra Romanovna*, I shall die of confusion if she speaks to me ; & indeed it is not my fault, 'tis all the goodness of the Princess Gallitzen that has put these things upon me '. In the meantime every eye was fix'd upon so radiant a personage who having no jewels of her own had always appear'd dress'd with simplicity & now blaz'd upon the astonish'd multitude like a New Sun on the horizon. I promis'd not to quit her the entire Evening, & I may thank her for passing it so agreeably. Every creature came to look at her & she shew'd herself to be admired with more innocence than Mashinka shews her new Shoes. All was fair sailing till towards supper time when all the terror of the Princess renew'd itself to her imagination. She form'd a thous<sup>d</sup> plans, figured a thous<sup>d</sup> terrors, was convinc'd that her evil genius would place her opposite to the P. & that she should be undone. In a word if Mortal ever suffer'd for the folly of being fine, she did. At length she could hold out no longer, but fairly told me she never had suffer'd so much misery in all her life as since the fatal moment she had submitted to be dress'd in borrow'd finery. Besides, an unlucky pin falling out loosen'd the tiara & a fresh terror succeeded—that of loosing some of the jewels !—so that she kept her head like one *in the pillory* who could neither turn to the right hand nor to the left.

In the meantime the preparations for supper continued. We were oblig'd to quit the ball room and all to assemble in the other Apartments. As luck would have it the P. was retired into one of the smaller ones to play her boston in quiet, but the boston might finish in a minute & then she would surely come into the room where we were. Notwithstanding the extreme amusement which she afforded me & her excessive *naïveté* which makes her society always new & agreeable, I began to feel a little cold after the dance & ask'd for my Shawl. The Word was like a beam of heavenly light to her Soul. She thank'd me again and again for inspiring her. ' Thanks be to God, my dear good friend,' said she

making three signs of the Cross & throwing up her eyes to heaven, with the most devout gratitude, 'I am now in Safety, I'll cover myself in a large Shawl; if I am placed opposite to my dear Aunt, I'll not eat a Morcel for fear of shewing my bracelets & rings or some of these Chains of diamonds, but if I am happy enough to be at a distance from her, you know I can throw off my Shawl and shew myself'. The tears were almost standing in her eyes from the sentiment of misery reliev'd & triumph renew'd, when in the fervour of bowing her head & crossing herself the loosen'd tiara moved to the left a hairsbreadth & at once plung'd her into three-fold anguish. 'No it is impossible,' say'd she. 'This Crown, these bandeaux cannot be hid. I have nothing for it but to go home,—but my dear friend I have a great mind to eat my supper & I know not what measure to pursue.' I persuaded her we should escape all observation by sitting at the same side of the table but much lower down than the P. & that she might eat her supper in peace. Supper was announc'd, we did as I had proposed following the P. & watching her movements, we thought ourselves in perfect safety, low & behold the Princess seated herself at the head of the table & consequently had the full view in perspective of all the Company, & what was worse searching *me* out she could not fail remarking my brilliant neighbour. A remove & change of dishes at length rais'd a sort of screen between us. M<sup>me</sup> Noroff then breathed & threw off her Shawl, but the moment supper was ended she vanish'd & return'd home where she woke the sleeping Noroff who was unwell, & for another moment, or rather for the *only* moment of the entire evening, she enjoy'd the satisfaction of being *magnificent without terror*!

And now to explain this fear of the Princess's observations, it was not without just grounds. The Princess is simplicity personified & has no conception of what a love of dress means. Indeed her ideas & conversation upon the Subject are so comically original that 'tis almost like a native of Kamstchatska when she talks of fashions, & when she buys bargains 'tis droll but often vexatious to see the first Woman of the Empire distinguish'd for her understanding, duped by every bearded rogue who chases to dispose of his trash & call it fine merchandise. But her ideas in some respects are excellent and particularly on the subject of appearing in borrow'd clothes. Nother incenses her to such a

degree, & no wonder! 'tis carried to such an excess at Moscow that in a great assembly one sees the same ornaments on one to-day, on another tomorrow, on a third, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>. In a word this slovenly mean practice has no bounds, and well may a drawingroom mark the Morals of a nation when this single circumstance paints the russian system. Every man borrows & mortgages his Estate & accumulates debts till were matters to be examin'd with justice I don't believe there are 10 Noblemen in the Empire who would have a right to live in their own homes. This is known but like borrow'd clothes it causes no shame. M. gave a great feast some monthes ago at Petersburg. It was so magnificent that [blank in MS.] say'd to him, 'this feast must have cost you immense sums of money'. 'It has cost me 10 guineas (100 roubles),' reply'd he. 'What do you mean?' 'Yes,' reply'd he smiling, '10 guineas worth of stampt paper for *promissory notes* will clear off the entire affair', & the promissory notes lye as light on his Conscience as the gratitude of those who figured at his fete lies on theirs.

But to return to the dear Princess who makes it her pride not to have a debt in the World. She is too good a patriot not to feel shame on these subjects, & she always says out what she feels, so that having more than once lash'd the vice of borrowing she makes the guilty tremble by her mere presence. With regard to coming early to places it is a thing which may fairly be placed amongst her odditys. No experience can cure her of appearing at every ball she goes before the Candles are lit, & as she is the first personage wherever she goes, she sets the Master, Mistress, Children & Servants all running helter skelter, some to put the rooms in order, some to finish their toylets & the father of the family to wake from his Evening nap & go to meet her at the hall Door & conduct her in. Kitty told me an anecdote of her which Baroness Hoggeir, then M<sup>lle</sup> de Poliansky, told her. One Court feast the Princess promis'd to be her Chaperone. Of course M<sup>lle</sup> P. was oblig'd to be ready at the time appointed by the P., but the hairdresser had disappointed her. The P. was all impatience, the niece all distress, tho' Knowing they would be an hour or two before any other creature arriv'd. At length she hustled on her Clothes & in rather ill humour got into the Carriage with the P. who order'd the Coachman to drive with all speed to the Summer Palace. They soon reach'd it; not a Coach disputed their passage.

They wander'd thro' the rooms, the servants were dusting the chairs & tables. Fatigued with this sameness the P. bethought herself that a *walk in the Garden* would be very *refreshing*, M<sup>lle</sup> P. did not dare deny it, & victime like follow'd her Aunt, who set seriously to walking for the good of their healths till the powder & frieze were blown out of M<sup>lle</sup> P's hair & herself render'd as cross as the tongues to enjoy her Eve<sup>s</sup> which did not begin for two hours after their arrival at the Palace! To the present hour 'tis the same thing & many a time have I pretended not to be ready to save A.P. a scolding, tho' after all we are sure to be the first everywhere.

*Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> [July]*

"On Sunday Eve<sup>s</sup> we took our guests on the *Linée* to see the Village of Yerphova & found it in high beauty. The tree planted there by Kitty is quite dry but her Ferns are green and flourishing, & 'tis all that remains of our improvements near the Waterfall, Nature having compleatly resumed her sway there & to say the truth she has manag'd the matter much better than we did. A flock of children came as usual to conduct us, but most of our former little ragamuffins are married.

During the time of the Militia a ridiculous report was circulated throughout the empire that peasant girls would be taken to serve as Soldiers. It gain'd such credit & spread such terror amongst the simple peasants that everyone made haste to marry their daughters to anybody in order to save them from being taken into his Majesty's service. Children of 10, 11, 12 & 13 years of age were married at a moment's warning, the Churches were crowded with the poor dupes & the Priests redoubled the alarm in order to increase their wedding fees. In some villages the Priests say'd that the peasants had no time to lose as a fresh Ukase was expected to stop all Marriages till the regiments were compleat. The panic became so excessive that money, corn, hay, even the miserable furniture of their Cottages, all was given only that the Priest would marry their Children & the inexorable wretches pillag'd them without mercy & perjur'd themselves forty times a day by marrying children to each other which is contrary to the Oath they take at the time of Consecration. The little rustic who I thought like Cap<sup>tn</sup> Lefebure 3 years ago is now 16 & grown tall & large; we



were surpris'd to see her amongst the Children, her dress being exactly like theirs. On questioning her we found she had stoutly battled for her freedom & *would not be married*. She say'd they might make a soldier of her if they chose, but she & two of her Companions had made a league not to marry. This girl keeps her father's horses & is as fine a wild colt as any in the field. She & her Companions *triumph* over the married Women & seem as averse to entering into the holy State of Wedlock at the time this terror took effect. I recollect then hearing of it at Moscow but had no idea of the effect it had produc'd which I now find was sufficient to make me wonder it was not greater.

. . . I now get up at 6 o'clock which is in reality at *five* by the Sun. 'tis before breakfast I write & translate Italien, & I find that from 6 till 9 o'clock I do more good than all the rest of the day and Eve<sup>s</sup>. 'tis a pity Nature has not been kind enough to make an early riser of me, but indeed she has not, for there is not a Morn<sup>g</sup> of my life that I Know what it is to wake of my own accord however Virtuous my resolutions the night before.

*Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> [July]*

"I am half blind by the bite of an odious gnat which made its supper last night on the eyelid of my right eye which is swell'd & so irritated that tho' it does not give me any pain it gives me intolerable uneasiness.

This Village resembles a Gypsies' Camp just now, 400 Peasants with some women & children included being assembled here from the surrounding Villages for the purpose of removing the manure from the Stables & Cow Yard up to the Mountain. They are come with their Chariots (as they are call'd) and horses, & yesterday Eve<sup>s</sup> I went with Dorothea Kotchetoff to see them at their Suppers. Three great fires were lighted on the grass & each family prepared a Supper of gruel or a Mess of bread, onions & some Kind of Soup. Their Casha is very like *Stirabout*, & this is a favorite dish. 12 or 14 Iron pots were prepared on each fire, & so successively as very good harmony appears to exist amongst them. We spoke to several & found them as merry as crickets all clustering round us & no doubt looking on us as Demigods because we came from the great house, while we on our side look'd on them as innocence & happiness personified, perhaps because we judg'd

the matter as they did from the appearance of the passing moment, & in fact all was gaiety and merriment after the day's labour. The moon was bright, their supper cook'd by a hundred hands and jokes & laughing & ready wit animated every countenance. As soon as a group of 6 or 7 sat down on the Grass to eat, each cross'd himself & bow'd down in sign of Gratitude to the Almighty. There is something delightful & highly affecting in seeing a sentiment of religion elevate the mind in a moment of hilarity & joy. I have spoken to the poor in England, in Ireland, & in Russia, & it appears to me that their ideas on the subject of religion are all pretty much the same. 'tis a fervent hope & belief in a future state, a love of God & fear of the Devil. Where Saints are pray'd to as in the Greek religion 'tis but a variety of names for one idea. Every Saint in the Calendar becomes God to their simple imaginations. They are only kept a little the poorer by the number of offerings made & images bought, but the sentiment is I believe perfectly single. After supper I heard the peasants 'shouting songs', till they fell fast asleep. There they go again 'tis a moving scene before my eyes, loaded carts by the hundred some conducted by bearded Men, some by the fair sex in embroyder'd shifts, scarlet petticoats, Shining earrings, gaudy necklaces, horn'd head-dresses & shoes made of the birch tree!

From humble peasants I'm going to fly off to the Emperour of Persia & the Empress Kath. the 1<sup>st</sup> of Russia<sup>1</sup> to mention a circumstance which the Princess told me yesterday Eveg. Russia was at that time well with the Persian Empire, the Sovereign of which wrote these words to Katherine after infinite praises & good wishes ' & may the Almighty protect thee from the misfortune of loving strong liquors, for I who write to thee have Eyes of Emeralds for my Sins & Nose of Rubys & am reduced to lie on the Couch of pain &c. &c.' This was simply a friendly wish of the good man to his august ally, but 'tis well known that Katherine was notorious for drunkenness. I am reading the History 'Nadir Chah Known by the name of Thomas Kalikhan Emperour of

<sup>1</sup> Catherine I (1683-1727), Empress of Russia. *Née* Martha Skavronsky, daughter of a Lithuanian peasant. Married Peter the Great as his second wife in 1711 and succeeded him as sole Empress on his death in 1725. Her niece Anna married Princess Daschkaw's uncle, Count Michael Woronzow, Chancellor under Elizabeth and the first of the family to become prominent in affairs.

Persia ' translated into french by Sir W<sup>m</sup> Jones from a persian manuscript at the request of the King of Denmark.<sup>1</sup> It was some of the extravagances of the persian style which recall'd that Anecdote to the princess's recollection which had come to her knowledge while her Uncle was Grand Chancellor during which period she says several political papers were read by her of a private & interesting Nature. . . . Really the Man & the manner of describing his high feats resembles excessively both the Man & the manner adopted by the french in speaking of Buonaparte. Nadir Chah made Persia and indeed all Asia tremble.<sup>2</sup> Every power became tributary to him, and he alone new model'd the laws of Nations. He thought himself the elect of Heaven. After a reign of several years uninterrupted prosperity, his conquer'd Nations revolted discontent became general & he was murder'd in his tent by one of his people. His family were all murder'd, the usurpers battled amongst themselves, anarchy & confusion reign'd triumphant. At last a more happy usurper usurp'd the throne & restor'd peace.

*Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> [July]*

" . . . Here is another Imperial Anecdote of the Empress Anne who by the by was consider'd as a Sovereign of the highest Merit & remarkable for her Cleaverness. It is well known that Peter the Great used to punish his Courtiers by ordering the cleaverest among them to become Fool if they displeased his Majesty. There are some names of note amongst those who were thus condemned to the most degrading of human states. The benign Empress Anne carried it a step farther & order'd a Prince Gallitzen to become a Hen ! For this purpose an enormous basket was made, a couple of dozen Eggs were put into it with Hay and everything a Hen can want & the wretched prince was forced to sit on the

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Jones (1746-1794), Oriental scholar. Son of William Jones the mathematician. The translation mentioned in the text was undertaken at the request of Christian VII of Denmark and was published in 1770, when the translator was only in his twenty-seventh year.

<sup>2</sup> Nadir Shah (1688-1747), King of Persia. Noted for his bravery and cruelty. Usurped the Persian throne in 1736 and was assassinated by a member of his bodyguard eleven years later. During this period he proved himself undoubtedly a military genius, conquering most of Afghanistan, India and Turkestan. His empire disintegrated after his death.

Eggs & *clock* to the edification of the entire court & its merciless sovereign ! . . .

*Monday [11<sup>th</sup> July]*

" . . . Yesterday was the Anniversary of the Empress Katherine's accession to the throne & of the most brilliant moment of Princess Daschkaw's life who still remembers it as such with a sentiment of pleasure & delight which beams over her countenance as often as the idea recurs.<sup>1</sup>

We had no guests to-day except the Serpokoff Lady who has taken 2 cambrick pocket handkerchiefs of mine to work in peasants' embroydery having remark'd that my work goes on very slow. She brought us fresh accounts of the ravage made by the Wild beast who ranges the forests round Serpoukoff. 18 persons have already been devour'd by it, Men as well as Children. At first it was call'd a Wolf, but 'tis now thought to be one of the wild beasts sent from lord knows where as a present to the Emperour & that it broke away from its Keeper when passing the forests near Serpokoff. Whatever it is it is a scandal that half a reg<sup>t</sup> is not sent out against it rather than let such a monster remain at liberty. Last week a wretched Mother with 2 young Children & one of 12 years of age being at a short distance from her Village suddenly perceiv'd the Monster. Terrified she snatch'd up her two infants & fled with such speed that she got into a Cottage in safety. There she recollected her third child, but it was too late. She ran with redoubled speed in pursuit of her accompanied by her husband, but the wretched beings had the anguish of seeing the mangled remains of their Child & would themselves have been devour'd had not their Dog absolutely prevented them from approaching near enough to be caught. 'tis say'd this Monster is perfectly fearless. M<sup>me</sup> Dimidoff quitted us very early for fear of the Monster.

*Wednesday July 13<sup>th</sup>*

" We dined to-day at Besobradova, M<sup>me</sup> Geheroff's. In the Eve<sup>g</sup> Prince Hielkoff & his bride came to pay a visit there. Prince H. introduced his lady to the Princess. We sat & sat & eat ices & drank tea & Hydromel with lumps of ice in each Glass (the Weather being overcomingly Warm) & Sat again till I was aston-

<sup>1</sup> June 29, old style.

ish'd at the P's remaining so much beyond her usual hour. At length she say'd to me in English, ' Indeed I am so very bashful dat I don't know how to go from here. It's indeed I can assure you because I ought to tell some compliment for dat Lady & I cannot find de way,' & the Lady is the image of M<sup>rs</sup> Reed & incapable of awing a Child much less such a Woman. But the compound of contradictions which form Princess D's character exceed belief. There are times when she is perfectly a Woman of fashion & very elegant in her manners, but she has learnt so little of the art of concealing her feelings, whatever they may be, that she often is settling according to her own fancy the dishes on the table at the moment that the guests are all waiting to eat them & a hundred other singularitys which it would be foolish & even wrong to write where they are so thoroughly counteracted by the admirable qualitys of her heart and understanding, by her invariable & comical love of truth (which makes her tell out things that set a large Company, staring, twittering, blushing, biting their lips, and betraying a thousand different emotions *not one of which she ever remarks*), by her Celebrity, her rank & age, all which give her a right to be an Oddity, & Nature has stamp't her such in the very fullest sense of the word. After planning & planning *how* to get away she at last say'd ' We'll go without being noticed ' & instantly paced out of the room but follow'd by every Creature in it.

We have arrang'd a little plan for me to see Kalouga, our *Government* town, which I express'd a wish to see the other day. . . . It was at Kalouga that Count d'Armfelt liv'd incognito during the Minority of the present King of Sweden.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

*Sunday Eve<sup>o</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> July 1808*

" Countess Orloff (Anne daughter of Alexis) dined here to-day. They are on their way to Kieff, & oh how I wish'd to go there

<sup>1</sup> Count Gustave Armfeldt (1757-1814), Swedish soldier and diplomat. Negotiated on behalf of Sweden the Russo-Swedish peace of 1790. After the murder of the Swedish king Gustavus III he was condemned to death but managed to escape to Russia, where he lived for some time at Kalouga. Reinstated by Gustavus IV in 1799 and appointed a general and Swedish Ambassador in Vienna. Commanded the Swedish forces in the war of 1807-1808. Left Sweden again on the deposition of Gustavus IV in 1809 and became a naturalised Russian citizen. Made a Member of the Council of Empire by Alexander I in 1812 and put in charge of the affairs of Finland.

with them. The Old Lady is goodness herself, & the young Countess is a sweet Creature. They are travelling with 9 carriages or Carts, Kitchen, food, Hay, in short like a moving Colony. The Fool of the old Countess is along with her, & I think myself a million of times more deserving the name of Fool at this instant than she is, for were it not for false delicacy & unpardonable folly I'm convinc'd I might have seen Kieff, & made the Journey there in a society so new, so remarkable, & so comical that the remembrance of it would have given me pleasure all my life. But false delicacy is the very bane of my existence.

*Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July*

“M<sup>me</sup> Dimidoff happen'd to dine here to-day & we of course mention'd our excursion to Kalouga, our Merchants & so forth. This bringing on the subject of the peculiar manners & customs of that class of persons she told us that as her husband is a sort of Governor of Serpoukoff she has frequent access to their houses & was lately invited to witness the first interview between a young Man & Woman who were destin'd for each other by their parents. This first interview always takes place during the dead of the night that no creature except the two families immediately concern'd may know anything of the matter, as if it happen'd that the Man refused on seeing her to marry the Woman chosen for him no other would marry her during her life. This however rarely happens as the fathers are very arbitrary. As for the young Women they are disposed of without a question on the subject & being kept close prisoners literally till they are married. 'tis no great wonder if they accept anything that's offer'd having nothing better to compare & give a preference to; besides their marriage releases them from a Confinement which they grumble against most bitterly. This first interview fixes the fate of the Young Woman look'd at as they call it, but the suppos'd first interview in presence of all the relations on both sides takes place some days after during which time the father of the bride elect sends a list of what gowns, petticoats, pearls, diamonds, Linnen, plate, &c. &c. &c. he intends to give with his daughter to the bridegroom elect, who frequently expostulates on the scantiness or bad taste of the goods naming what pleases him better. When the Assembly

of relatives takes place & the Matchmaker, the young Man begs this most essential personage to ask for such a young Woman by name in a profound whisper ; she does so ; he is then permitted to touch her hand. From that moment they are consider'd man & wife. The Arrangements for the Ceremony are public & all's say'd. There is no difference in the religion of this class of persons from that of the Noblesse.

. . . . .

*Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> [August]*

“ The usual routine of my morning (which is to get up at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past six, write or rather translate french into italian for an hour or more, then bathe, then breakfast, then sing, then read italien for half an hour, then play on the guitar for less time & then play on the horizontal harp till dinner) was interrupted by the loveliness of the weather. I could not resist spending the entire of it reading *the Castle of Otranto* in Italien in the Chinese temple in the Field of roses.

My evening has been spent chiefly in shewing the Lions of Troitskoe to Count Wolodimir Orloff who arriv'd here unexpectedly when everyone except myself was gone out to walk. Civility oblig'd me to do the honours of the place for him & the accident of not finding the princess amongst the Masons nor meeting any one of our Society in the Walks kept me *tête à tête* with Count O. for nearly 3 hours. I don't recollect ever finding a *tête à tête* so dull a thing as is a *select* society of 3 or 4 persons, & this one is no exception for the Count & I got thro' the time perfectly well. By the by he is a lover of the English & so were all the Orloffs. As soon as the Princess appear'd I resign'd my charge to her & return'd to finish what I had been writing.

. . . . .

*Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> [August]*

“ Sunday Eve<sup>g</sup> M<sup>me</sup> Gehireff drank tea with me in my room & told us there was to be a ball at M<sup>me</sup> de Narishkin's for the name's day (15<sup>th</sup> August) of M<sup>lle</sup> N.,<sup>1</sup> that they did not invite a creature, but that it would be consider'd as a very particular compliment if some of us would go there. Accordingly I propos'd it to the

<sup>1</sup> Possibly wife of M. Alexander Narishkin, Grand Chamberlain. See above, p. 317, note.

Princess, the matter was soon settled, and yesterday at 4 o'clock after dinner we (Anna Petrovna & I) dress'd ourselves out *rataplan* & set off in the *Dormeuse* 4 horses abreast & two before to M<sup>me</sup> Gehireff. We made but a few minutes delay there & follow'd her & her two Children in their Carriage. We all proceeded to Lapatina, the name of M<sup>me</sup> de Narishkin's place where we found a great number of persons assembled of the Neighbourhood, most of whom I had never beheld before. Others had come from Moscow for the occasion. M<sup>lle</sup> N. was enchanted to see us, and as she has a particular fancy for me which I return her most cordially we sat together & I began to question concerning the Motley Group before my eyes, all utter Strangers. There was her sister who had been a dozen years ago a beauty, a Coquet & as she expresses it herself 'on the very brink of periditon' when her good stars threw in her way an elderly ugly commonplace Man call'd Prince Sherbatoff who she married & whose good temper & good sense has turn'd her into the very best of wives. With them was one of their Children, a lovely boy 4 years old dress'd in full uniform as an huzzar officer of rank. This dear Child with his Maid made part of the Company.

Then I was shewn Taruss beautys & Taruss beaux & last of all an old Lady past 70 whose story would be wound up into a most interesting and wonderful romance in Eng<sup>d</sup> or even in France & certainly in Germany where the horrible is so much admir'd, but I have only caught the general outline & that imperfectly. She is a M<sup>me</sup> de Backmetoff paternal Grandmother to M<sup>me</sup> Narishkin's 2 orphan Grandchildren. She was a Lady of large fortune, a Widow living independently on her own Estates governing her Slaves at the period of Pugatcheff's famous rebellion during Katherine's reign.<sup>1</sup> Her ill fortune brought the Imposter into

<sup>1</sup> Emilian Pugacheff, a Don Cossack, appeared in East Russia in 1773, claiming to be Catherine II's husband, the murdered Czar Peter III. He was joined by a mixed horde of Cossacks, Tartars, and Siberian exiles and he set up a bogus Court. His forces captured town after town on the Volga and in the Urals and extended westward towards Moscow, whose panic-stricken inhabitants for a while daily expected him to appear and massacre them. The rebellion now developed into a peasant war, and as such must rank as the first coherent attempt at proletarian revolution in Russia. When he had been at large for nearly two years Pugacheff was finally surrendered by his followers to Catherine's general, Suvorov, who had suppressed the rising. He was now brought in an iron cage to Moscow, where he was forthwith tried and executed.



her neighbourhood, and her rank & situation became a Crime in the eyes of the rabble who follow'd the pretender. Three times a cord was ty'd round her throat & every preparation made to hang her. One of Pugatcheff's Generals, a Cossack who as well as all the rest of his Generals was distinguish'd from the lower ranks by a Lady's Fan stuck in the front of his Cap, (these fans taken amidst the plunder of all the Noblesse they could lay hands on were stript of the paper or silk coverings they had had and became in Pugatcheff's Army the reward of merit) fell desperately in love with M<sup>me</sup> Backmetoff's favorite waiting maid & this circumstance alone saved her life. Each time that her Mistress was threaten'd with any imminent danger this faithful Creature employ'd her influence with the Kossack and a word from him was sufficient to controul the rabble under his Command ; but very soon both the Mistress & the Maid were conducted as prisoners to the rebels' Camp & there it was that the protection of her waiting maid became essential to her safety. This Young Woman's power with her Lover was unlimited, & she employ'd it to save her Mistress from all the insult & danger to which as a Noble she was particularly exposed. It was not however in her power to save her from witnessing hourly the enormitys perpetrated in the Impostor's Camp. Men & Women by hundreds were hung before her Eyes, & one day she saw her intimate friend with her Child, a girl of 7 or 8 years old, flogg'd to death by those inhuman Monsters ! The extraordinary power of her Slave over her Lover saved M<sup>me</sup> B. upon this occasion from sharing the same fate. During all this time she was oblig'd to name Pugatcheff ' Your Imperial Majesty ' & speaking of him ' His Imperial Majesty Peter '. In the mean time her House was plunder'd of Plate, furniture & whatever the Army thought worth taking & then burnt to the ground, her Slaves were all forc'd to acknowledge Pugatcheff as Lawful Sovereign & she was reduc'd to absolute beggary.

I have since learnt that She had quitted her house on hearing of the approach of the rebels in hopes of saving herself by flight. For this purpose she with the few persons who attended were all disguised as peasants & She pass'd for the Wife of her Coachman. It was in a neighbouring village they were taken & in the course of one day her imminent danger, the love of the Kossack for her

maid & the protection which it procur'd her all took place. The following day they were conducted to the rebels' camp. After remaining there a fortnight witnessing horrors which I'm told are in detail scarcely comprehensible so far do they exceed in cruelty & abomination anything one has an idea of, after being in hourly terror of being hung or flogg'd to death and pardon'd by the protection of the Kossack, Martha (the name of the waiting maid), obtain'd a passport for her Mistress & her suppos'd husband the Coachman to quit the Camp & go to another Village where they pretended to have relations amongst the peasants. When the Kossack ask'd Pugatcheff for her pardon his answer was 'The Devil pardon her', and when she was brought into his presence to thank his 'Imperial Majesty' for the favor, He say'd 'God & the Emperour pardon thee'. It was then she found courage to ask for a passport without which she would have been hung by the first troop she met with. He order'd one of his Generals to give it, but the General not knowing how to write took an atom of filthy paper & scratching on it a few crosses & other signs gave it to her. The same night Martha, M<sup>me</sup> Backmetoff & the Coachman, all barefooted & in ragged peasants' dresses, shew'd the pass to the sentinels & escaped.

Martha having promised to return to her Cossack & having no intention to fulfil her promise, they conceal'd themselves in the Woods by day & got forward in their Journey during the night living upon Charity. This continued a few days after which they ventured to appear during the day. In this Way they made 300 Versts Meeting continually with insults & dangers & their lives spared by shewing the pass which when read by any of the rebels was return'd to M<sup>me</sup> Backmetoff with 'the Devil speed you'. The last adventure they met with when near Katherine's troops was a Cossack who rais'd his pike to stab M<sup>me</sup> B. as she was walking the road nearly exhausted by fatigue & terror. At the same instant by a providential interference which sounds almost too miraculous a man rais'd his sword behind the Cossack & cutting off his head at a stroke it fell at M<sup>me</sup> Backmetoff's feet & was the first warning she receiv'd of her danger. Shortly after they reach'd Moscow where M<sup>me</sup> B. no sooner found herself in safety than, exhausted by all she had gone thro', her nature yielded to the excess of her sufferings & for an entire year she lost her reason.

Her faithful Martha never quitted her, & the first use M<sup>me</sup> B. made of her returning reason was to give Martha her liberty, to name her her friend & equal & from that instant till her death which happen'd last year she lived with M<sup>me</sup> B. on the most perfect equality, dining at her table, receiv'd by all her friends & respected by everyone.

M<sup>me</sup> Backmetoff's adventures were of course made known to the Empress Katherine who naturally compensated her as far as was in her power, & reinstated her in her wealth, lands, Houses & so forth as soon as the rebellion was ended ; but the impressions of horror which she then receiv'd only paved the way to sufferings of another nature & her entire life seems but a tissue of misery. She had idoliz'd her husband who she lost at the end of 4 years. At the time of his death she was with child of her 4<sup>th</sup> Son, & such was her agony for the loss of her husband that she has since confess'd, at the End of six weeks when it is the Custom for *every one* who loses a relation to visit their Tomb & take a final farewell of the wandering soul which finds its place of rest on the 40<sup>th</sup> Day after it quits the body, she purposely threw herself with such force on the Marble which cover'd him that for some moments they thought her dead—instead of which however she but advanc'd her Confinement, her Child was born in perfect health, and her own was unimpaired.

At the period of Pugatcheff's incursion her 4 sons were either at Military Academics or in the Service. Soon after she was re-established the 2 elder of her Sons lost their senses & continue to the present hour in that most horrible of human states. The 2 younger became very Charming Young men & enter'd into the Military Service. The elder was very intimately acquainted with the Prince Daschkaw & in the same service with him. Prince D. had a beautiful Dog which M. de Backmetoff frequently beg'd him to give him & which the Prince constantly refused half joke half earnest. At length he wrote to him promising to give him the Dog if he would pass a few days with him as recompence. M. Backmetoff consented, the few days expir'd, he receiv'd his favorite Dog, & prepared for his journey. In Russia 'tis very much the Custom to travel by night & sleep in the Carriage w<sup>ch</sup> is prepared for the purpose. M<sup>r</sup> B. intended to follow this practice & as usual his loaded pistols were placed near him. Settling himself

to sleep he push'd the Dog away from him, the Animal was forc'd against the pistols one of which went off in the instant & shot the Young Man dead on the spot. The same day that this fatal event was made known to his Mother She receiv'd a letter to inform her that her youngest son was taken prisoner by the Swedes with whom Russia was then at War. I don't know what effect it produc'd on her but she surviv'd it and a year after she had the Consolation of seeing her only Child one may say who married M<sup>lle</sup> de Narishkin, liv'd with the old Lady, and for three years she tasted perfect contentment. At the end of that time her son fell ill & after some months confinement died. Her daughter in law continued to live with her & her two Grand Children, but in two years She likewise died, & the poor old Lady feeling herself unfit for the education of the Children resign'd them to the care of their Maternal Grandmother whose story by the by would make a perfect contrast to M<sup>me</sup> Backmetoff's, everything she undertook prospering & her life as little exemplary in the ways of virtue & rectitude as M<sup>me</sup> B's was remarkable for unabated Cheerfulness of disposition, resignation to the Will of God & for many years a total abstraction from everything but prayer & preparation for death. She came to M<sup>me</sup> Narishkin's to visit her Grandchildren & chose the Name day of M<sup>lle</sup> N. expressly, but as there is a *Lent* just now which lasts a fortnight she would not for the World profane it by looking at dancing or feasting. She therefore very soon retired to her own Apartments & we began to dance.

M. Eushkoff (the lover of M<sup>lle</sup> Narishkin) was there. He shines at balls & quivives. I was assured I did so too, which Compliment tho' probably address'd to the Clasp of my Necklace (whose story I'll tell afterwards) put me in to such dancing trim that in reality the ball was extremely animated & excessively pleasant. At past one o'clock we ceas'd to dance & M. Eushkoff led the way to the Windows where we saw a most magnificent firework which he had prepared. We then sup'd. M. Eushkoff then shew'd some miraculous *hocus pocus* tricks which lasted till we took leave at past two O'clock. I must not omit a circumstance which gave me great pleasure. M<sup>me</sup> Narishkin beg'd I would allow her to present her brother to me as he had been in England & had known a relation of mine at Bath & in Russia, M<sup>rs</sup> Hamilton. I was of Course delighted to become acquainted with him. He is a man of near

sixty with great urbanity of manner. He spoke of Mr<sup>s</sup> Hamilton in a way that recall'd her perfectly & convinc'd me he had felt the Value of her Character & the Gentlewomanliness of her manners. M<sup>me</sup> Narishkin on comparing notes found that she too had known Mr<sup>s</sup> H. while in Russia, and her eldest daughter the Princess Scherbatoff who was probably a Child at the time, told me that what made the greatest impression on her was 'the pretty English Maid Mary' which Mr<sup>s</sup> Hamilton had had & whose beauty she recollected with pleasure to the present moment.

I will now acquit my conscience of the story of my shining necklace & then quit the ball which fatigues me more in description than in enacting. Christine Queen of Sweden <sup>1</sup> had once upon a time a very beautiful opal ring set round with very miserable little rubys. This ring she gave to one of the Lords of her Court who gave it to his Son. Count Pannin, being Ambassador at Stockholm from the Court of Russia & an Amateur of rarities, saw this ring, & finding the stone of very uncommon beauty exchange'd a Solitaire of the same size against it. Return'd to Russia the Princess Daschkaw saw & admired it, Count P. her uncle gave it to her, & a year ago she had it magnificently sett in diamonds as a clasp for a necklace & gave it to me !

We arriv'd at Troitskoe before five in the Morn<sup>g</sup>, & at 10 I swam off all my fatigues.

. . . . .

*Friday 18<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"While I was swimming this Morn<sup>g</sup> & as proud as a Peacock of the progress I have made, my little Canary bird took advantage of my absence & forcing itself thro' the jealousy of the Window flew away. We were all in great Woe for the pretty little Creature, but our researches were in vain, when low & behold in the Eve<sup>g</sup> it flew back into the Lawn & allow'd itself to be caught by the first servant who saw it. When Gabriel brought it to me I found it so fatigued that I thought it dying. A few drops of white wine blown on it lightly from the mouth revived it.

<sup>1</sup> Christina (1626-1689), Queen of Sweden. Daughter of the great Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus. Abdicated in 1654 after ten years' reign of doubtful advantage to Sweden and travelled extensively in Europe, where she abjured Lutheranism for the Roman Catholic faith. Flighty and tyrannical. Had her secretary assassinated in France for alleged betrayal of her secrets in 1657.

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> [August]

"... M<sup>me</sup> Narishkin, M<sup>lle</sup> N., M. Eushkoff & M<sup>lle</sup> Backmetoff dined here yesterday. I was again the Lion Shower of Troitskoe to M. Eushkoff as the Princess had a Cassino party which divided the Company exactly in two. I led *my troops* thro' all the walks, &c. &c. &c. &c. and I find Lionizing a very amusing occupation. Each person sees the same Objects so very differently & one has so good an opportunity of seeing or fancying they see the turn of a person's mind in the kind of observations they make. Of two Men & a boy of 14 years old to whom I have been Lionizer lately one of the Men (pass'd sixty) pass'd unnotic'd the views, the river, the lovely birch trees, & question'd me concerning some paultry shrubs & how much money the Princess rec<sup>d</sup> for her Mill! The 2<sup>nd</sup> a Man near 30 wish'd to know how many Villages she had. The boy of 14 years of age besides admiring all that was to be admired & siezing the usefulness as well as beauty of different objects began to plan improvements & create a hundred beautys from his imagination, & ended by saying with the most perfect earnestness & unaffectedness, 'I should like to be here long enough to see this beautiful place in different times of the day & different humours, for you know, Miss Wilmot, things change entirely to one's feelings when one is sorry or glad or melancholy or well pleased'. I should have taken this for the language of a parrot merely spoken by rote, were I not so well acquainted with the style of education given to little Count Petrusia Bouterline,<sup>1</sup> & that he says whatever he thinks & nothing else. By the by he speaks English like an Englishman. It was *he* who after speaking English with the Emperour one day while quite a Child was ask'd playfully by his Imperial Majesty whether he (the Emp.) spoke English well. 'Pretty well', was his answer, 'but 'tis a pity they gave you a Scotchman to teach you the language'. The Emperour was of course enchanted with him.

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> [August]

"Yesterday I receiv'd a present from M<sup>me</sup> de Pisireff, Anna Petrovna's sister, which delighted me, a Peasant's dress in the true fashion of the Married Women. I put it on immediately & went

<sup>1</sup> Son of Count Dmitri Buturlin, Director of the Hermitage, and Princess Daschkaw's nephew.

with bread & salt to shew myself to the Princess. After that I cross'd the Court to go to Anna Petrovna's Apartments. Near the staircase outside I saw a poor Woman's pitcher standing, & intending to ask for 'a cure for my good Man, who was down lying with the fever' I snatch'd up the black pitcher & began to mount the steps when Grossy Ivanovitch who had remark'd the transaction from his window in the opposite building and who sincerely believ'd I was an ill intention'd jade bent on nothing but pilfering stutter'd aloud 'Thief, Thief, drop that pitcher or I'll . . .'. The poor man was near dropping into the earth with shame when forgetting I was a peasant I turn'd round to see what was the cause of the outcry & shew'd my face. I have got leave today (in recompence) for this poor man *at last* to marry a Wife. He has chosen the daughter of Kitty's Washerwoman.

By letters rec<sup>d</sup> from Petersburg this Eve<sup>s</sup> it appears that at the last feast at Peteroff the pretty little Maisonette which Peter the 1<sup>st</sup> built there in the Dutch style and furnish'd in the same caught fire & is burnt to the ground. This is a great pity as it was a very interesting object. . . .

*Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> [August]*

"Cap<sup>tn</sup> Hamilton, a Irishman who commands a 110 gun ship in the Russian service & who is (like all the other English Officers in the Service) suspended on account of the War & lives at Moscow, came here yesterday Morn<sup>g</sup> & quitted us this Morn<sup>g</sup>. He is a man who has travel'd over half the world, who reads a great deal, *rattles* a great deal more, plays pranks like a wild schoolboy, but who appears to me to have good sense at the bottom with honesty, warmth & goodnature, fire & fidelity equal to any Hibernian I am acquainted with. He retains too much however of the Irish manners which are not an atom soften'd down by all he has seen of the World, by the variety of languages he speaks & the variety of company he associates with tho' he quitted the North of Ireland at 10 years of age. I made tea for him in my room, & as he arriv'd at about 12 o'clock it was near dinnertime before his breakfast & a hundred circumstances of his travels which he told me were ended.

After dinner conversation with the Princess & rain prevented our walking for a long time. At length we did so, but were caught

in so violent a shower that we were forced to take shelter in the temple & remain there for an hour at least. On our return we drank tea, had music, & then Cards. Cap<sup>tn</sup> Hamilton is wild with enthusiasm. Music of a pathetic nature bewilders him, poetry sets his brain on fire, & the beauty of the Russian language I never heard spoken of by mortal except the Princess Daschkaw in the same way that he speaks of it. At the game of Boston he was like a hairbrain'd Schoolboy, but he makes his cause good everywhere. The Princess likes him very well & Anna Petrovna is enchanted with him. . . .

*Monday 28<sup>th</sup> [August]*

" . . . I am reading a little essay in italian written by Dr Borsa on the present taste for literature in Italy. He deplores the preference given to foreign productions & foreign languages & the *Magpye* mingle of foreign expressions with the language of the Country. He naturally looks upon it as the forerunner of further humiliation (the good man was a prophet) & speaks so reasonably on the subject that I am more than ever jealous of the preservation & perfectionizing of English which I look upon as a bulwark for the independence of the Nation.

This subject recalls to my recollection an anecdote which Princess Daschkaw told me. The Marquis of Galiano who was a very agreeable man & an author was one day at table describing some event with great animation & fire. As the Society was French he spoke the french language, but in the warmth of his colouring he frequently used italien words. A Lady who was present constantly interrupted him with great politeness to help him. '*Monsieur veut dire* (you mean to say) such and such a word.' At last irritated by her kind attention to his phraseology he turn'd round to her. 'Madam' (say'd he) 'your language is very poor, I only give it alms. Pray suffer me to continue what I was saying.' And yet this *poor* french language is adopted and half Europe will speak no other !

*Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> [August]*

" I was unwell this Eve<sup>g</sup> & lay down on my bed for half an hour to try (as usual) to sleep off my illness. During the time I was



asleep Arena's son a child of 5 years old who is very fond of me came to see his Mother & was desir'd to make no noise as Mavra Romanovna was ill. He began to cry immediately & say'd he knew Mavra Romanovna, his Golden Mistress, was going to die. Martishka told me this when I woke. I call'd the Child and ask'd him what he would do if I died. 'I'd pray to God for you' was his answer. This little circumstance made me start. There was an earnestness in the Child's manner & a *commonplaceness* in his way of supposing me likely to die which brought the idea more home to my mind than I ever felt it before. I have talk'd of death a hundred times, I have twice made my Will, & yet I declare solemnly that I have *never* made a serious reflection on the subject as applicable to my own Mortality. I wish to do so frequently, but during the day I have given myself so much occupation that I literally have not time, & as for the Night I no sooner lay my head on my pillow than a profound Slumber robs me of every thought till Arena wakens me & I find 'tis already later than I wish for my Daily tasks. I have made various preparations of worldly matters with memorandums 'when I die', but tho' my understanding is satisfied by these things & my mind set at rest, yet the idea is not familiar to me. I believe I should not fear to die, but I know I have fifty perspectives of happiness in this wicked world which convince me that I have not yet set about educating my soul for its final resting place.

This subject reminds me of a book which one of the Chaunters lent me lately which gives the lye to all I have say'd on the subject of purgatory being one of the Creeds of the Greek Church. The book is fill'd with prints of the Soul's employment during the 40 days' interval between its quitting the body & finding a place of rest. It is suppos'd to be given into the charge of two Angels who receive it in the form of a little Man out of the Mouth of the dying person & whose business is to fly with it over every part of the Earth it has inhabited shewing it the deeds it has done under its mortal form. It is made to hover over its birthplace, to see the actions as a dutiful or disobedient Child, as a Christian! It is made to see the scenes of debauch it has delighted in, the Good Actions it has perform'd! It visits its friends, its enemies! It sees again the scene of its death! In a word *no Widow can be sure she is alone* till she has perform'd the dutys of the 40<sup>th</sup> day already

describ'd & so procur'd rest for the Wandering Spirit of her deceased Lord.

Perplex'd by this new creed I ask'd the Princess what it meant. She told me that there was a division of opinion on the subject ; multitudes believ'd one way & multitudes the other. For my part I will buy my Chaunter's book from him if I can, or rather its fellow, for this one belongs to the Church. 'tis clear that all the Villagers here believe in the wandering of the Soul. What extraordinary embroidery superstition & priestcraft works on the beautiful Simplicity of Christ's Morality, but such as it is I cannot resist quoting from Memory an idea which I read somewhere in a french Author who of course takes in the priestcraft with the rest. ' Blessed doctrine, that of the Christian Religion which, seeming to occupy us only with the hopes of a future life, gives us likewise supreme felicity in this ! '

*Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1808 N.S.*

" 'The business of religion' is an expression which I now understand perfectly as applicable to the Greek, the roman Catholick & the Jews' creed. We protestants make it so little a *business* that I sincerely hope we make it more a *sentiment*, and surely surely that is an offering more Worthy our Creator. Some days ago Alexandra Kotchetoff told me that when there was a question of her marrying M. de — a very excellent Match which her father wish'd her exceedingly to accept she wrote the word ' Yes ' on one scrap of paper and ' No ' on the other. She then gave the two papers to someone to mingle & throw behind an Image of a Saint which her Mother had given her, resolv'd & even *bound by a promise* to adopt whatever advice the Saint should give. She then pray'd before it & at the end of some time shut her eyes, made the Sign of the Cross & drew out a paper. It was the answer to her question ' Shall I marry M. de — ' The Saint answer'd ' No ', & from that time she say'd no power on earth could ever tempt her to become his Wife. The Princess Alexandra Gallitzen went a pilgrimage to know whether the Saints council'd her to marry General Loptoff ! On this occasion they answer'd ' Yes ', & she became his Wife. 'tis true the Lady's inclinations in both cases were the same as the tutelary Saints' ; but there are many moments when the lot of life depends on accidents as trivial as the

Caprice of a Saint, & I would have given half my fortune to have had one at my elbow last Winter when the question ' Shall I go to Eng<sup>d</sup> or remain in Russia ? ' cost me so very near dear & was at last decided more by a terror panic than by anything which my reason can now justify.

I am sometimes so low spirited on this subject that it makes my heart ache. I blame myself for suffering the single sentiment of gratitude to master my reason & all the affections which bind me to my native Land for blinding me to the very peculiar circumstances which entangle me here, & were I to lose any of my family or near friends before I see them a thousand self reproaches would aggravate the loss and embitter my existence. Who can tell how long the War may last ? Who can tell what may be the fate in which this ill judg'd step has involv'd me ? Every one that speaks to me *admires* me for sacrificing my wishes to the happiness of the princess, but dearly as I love her I cannot accept as praise what I look upon as *Madness*. To return Voluntarily to danger when honour had paved me a path out of it deserves no better name, & yet at the moment I remember that the danger far from alarming me was a sort of incentive. I knew the p[rincess] was unhappy, *miserable*, I felt shock'd at the idea of being less unhappy than she was because she told me that I alone held her to existence, & that my affection told me I should be happy thro' her means perhaps & leave her wretched thro' mine depriving her voluntarily of what she ador'd—myself. This is all false false reasoning—it was madness—& I here protest solemnly for myself in case any unlook'd for event gives me again the power of returning home that I shall be *criminal* instead of *generous* if I do not embrace it, unless indeed circumstances differ widely from what they are at present on more subjects than one. The prudence which prevents my writing a million of things, *each* strong eneough in itself to justify what I now say, is greatly my enemy. Time softens, obliterates a thousand things. . . . Oh I shall say too much if I say more, & yet I am so afraid of myself after what has already pass'd that I want to make a memorandum which may help me like a Saint to do what is best, what is necessary, if I have another opportunity. . . .

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> [September]

"... This Evening I have receiv'd a letter from Moscow full of good news concerning the affairs of Spain & Portugal, & the P. has receiv'd another which speaks of the probability of peace between Eng<sup>d</sup> and Russia. I am a very Drum on which good or ill news beats the joyous *reveille* or the solemn funereal Stroke—I who have been a hundred times call'd a Philosopher ! I wonder whether my brother philosophers were as much Drums as I am to my utter confusion, for I protest I once thought myself made of better materials than parchment & Wind !

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> [September]

"The Princess has had a great *rummage* to-day. Amongst a variety of other things she found some letters from Lady Arabella Denny, extremely interesting & which prove the high opinion which that charming old Lady entertain'd of her.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lady Arabella Denny (1708-1792), Irish philanthropist and "blue-stocking." Younger daughter of Thomas (Fitzmaurice), 1st Earl of Kerry by his wife Anne, daughter of the celebrated physician Sir William Petty. She married in 1725 Colonel Arthur Denny of Tralee, County Kerry. Her husband played a conspicuous part in the extraordinary affair of the "Danish silver robbery" after the wreck of the *Golden Lyon* in the Bay of Tralee in 1728, which has been graphically described by the historian Froude in his *English in Ireland*. Noted for her kindness and eccentricities. She founded the Magdalen Asylum for Fallen Women and the Foundling Hospital for Children in Dublin. Princess Daschkaw, who visited her in Ireland, was taken to see the former institution and specially composed a hymn which was sung in the Magdalen Chapel. Princess Daschkaw also planted two ilex trees, which can still be seen beside the gate of "Lisinaskea," her house at Blackrock, near Dublin. In 1760 Lady Arabella Denny presented a clock for the use of the foundling children, its object being, in the words of the inscription which she had placed on it, "to mark that as children reared by the spoon must have a small quantity of food at a time it must be offered frequently, for which purpose this clock strikes every 20 minutes at which notice all the infants that are not asleep are to be discreetly fed." She is believed to have been the only woman ever admitted an honorary member of the Dublin society for promoting arts and agriculture. She died, leaving express instructions in her will that she was not to be buried till she was dead and that after putrefaction had set in her jugular veins were to be opened. Her nephew, Lord Shelburne, who became Prime Minister and 1st Marquess of Lansdowne, described her as the only person "to whom I owe any good I either learned or imbibed in the early part of my education" and "to whose virtues, talents, temper, taste, true religion and goodness of every kind it is impossible for me to do sufficient justice."

The letters mentioned here were subsequently given to Martha Wilmot, who published them in her edition of the *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*.

The death of M. de Beckleshoff is announc'd in the Russ Gazette. He was the last Governor General of Moscow & a very respectable Man. The manner in which his death is announc'd is under an article entitled ' Excluded from the Service ', such a person for such and such a reason, such another by death. I don't recollect whether I mentioned the death of M<sup>me</sup> Tutleman wife to M. Tutleman the present Governor Gen<sup>l</sup> of Moscow—it happened 6 months ago—dear little *beautiful* old Woman.

*Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>tr</sup> N.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Sep<sup>tr</sup> O.S.*

" . . . Baroness d'Hoggeir is just arriv'd with her little girls. I find by her that Baron Steding had scarcely set foot in Stockholm when he was employ'd by the King & set off instantly on some service. She tells me likewise that Lady Haddington, M<sup>rs</sup> Pollen's sister, M<sup>rs</sup> Crighton & some other English persons have quitted Petersburg within a Month & are arriv'd at Stockholm. I have made up my mind for the Coming Winter, but in the Spring, Oh heavens, I tremble to think of the scenes I shall have. M<sup>me</sup> Hoggeir has brought us a world of news & gossip. Those brave Spaniards are doing Wonders. . . .

*Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> [September]*

" . . . To-day I have finish'd my translation of an old russ song which Princess Daschkaw used to sing for her husband Prince D. She adores this poem & cites it as perfection. I have heard her repeat it to different people, and never without her being bathed in tears. The last person she repeated it to was Capt<sup>n</sup> Hamilton whose enthusiasm caught fire & made him fling himself into such attitudes, rub his frouzled Crop till every hair stood erect, swear by his Ship & Ship's Company (not to mention *real Oaths*) till to me who understood it imperfectly at the time the Scene was most truly Comi-trajic. Here it is ; the translation is very tolerably faithful.

While I describe my tortur'd state  
To sooth the agony I prove  
Cease e'en a moment to torment  
Oh pityless, oh cruel Love.

Unite bewilder'd thoughts again,  
And the fond cause of all my pain,  
Declare to my belov'd ;  
That she is faithless bid her know,  
And for the love with which I glow,  
My peace she has destroy'd.

Oh thou, who into deep despair  
Hast plung'd my soul adoring thee  
Recall the time when kindred love  
Bid thee confide thy charms to me,

When seeking me from Morn till Eve,  
By Vows thou taught me to believe,  
That I was dear to thee,  
Remember all thou say'd, and how  
Thou bade me oft repeat the Vow  
Of Love & Constancy.

Thus vanquishing a heart enflam'd,  
Triumphantly thou made it thine ;  
Each moment adding to my flame  
My Soul existed but in thine.

And still alas in thine it lives  
For tho' thy falsehood anguish gives,  
Yet is thy image dear ;  
Oh see these gushing tears which flow  
Oh see my endless torturing Woe  
Their witness is sincere.

Thy perjury o'erwhelms me quite,  
Tears all my heavy moments fill,  
Yet e'en by that I am unchang'd,—  
I will for ages love thee still,

And pardon all. Love by a Sigh  
Has check'd reproach, bid anger fly,  
Thou'rt innocent my Love,  
Yes thou art guiltless towards me.  
The fault is in my Destiny,  
I curse the fate I prove.

*Light of my Life*, if I offend  
 Retracing Days which long are flown ;  
 If such remembrance gives thee pain,  
 Pity the Weakness which I own.

T'was Love who all my grief my rage  
 My writhing Soul thus to assuage,  
 Made me commit the crime ;  
 Oh pardon if I anger thee  
 For all my Life t'will surely be  
 The *first* and the *last* time.

TROITSKOE 20<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup> 1808. M.W.

*Thursday Morn<sup>g</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> [September]*

“ Yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup> I walk'd till very late with A.P. in the garden talking of the nameless dangers to which we are exposed, & particularly *me*. I blamed myself again & again for having allow'd my imagination to get the better of my reason last Winter when I might certainly have return'd to England, & that in so creditable & agreeable a manner. We bewilder'd ourselves in the dark mazes of futurity & ended with a hope that heaven would send us some unlook'd for good, since our entangled state baffled all conjecture of a reasonable nature. The very instant I enter'd the house a letter was put into my hands from M<sup>r</sup> Haws telling me as news that M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Cotton (M<sup>rs</sup> C. is sister to D<sup>r</sup> Halliday) would set out for Eng<sup>d</sup> in a very short time. It absolutely struck me as the voice of heaven shielding me from I know not what danger. I have written to M<sup>r</sup> H., & if there is not an unlook'd for cause to prevent me I will most certainly accompany them & bless the Almighty for giving me so unmerited an opportunity of repairing what I have done. If I succeed I will rejoice in my return to the Princess, she is now in perfect health ; I shall have gratified every demand that affection, gratitude & attachment to my belov'd Princess claim'd from my feelings, even to a romantic excess ; & my happiness in once more seeing my Father & my beloved family will surely be heighten'd by what I have suffer'd this last year from the cruel conflicts I have had. Conflicts *within my mind* are now ended but I must arm myself with tenfold courage for the opposition which I fear the Princess will make and for my own feelings

towards her. In two Months I shall probably be in Sweden. Oh the bliss of being able to tell my precious family that I am there, that they have no more to apprehend, that we shall soon meet. Great God, can it be possible ! How people get away now I cannot comprehend.

*Saturday Morn<sup>g</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> Sep<sup>tr</sup> N.S.*

“ In a few hours we shall set out for Moscow, and in a few days my fate will be decided. I have felt so agitated ever since I rec<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup> H[aw]’s letter that I have done nothing but think & think of the best way of telling the news to my beloved Princess if the scheme can take place. In the meantime ’tis a profound secret to every creature except A.P.

Yesterday the spell which seem’d to hang over the Copy of the Princess’s History was broken. She has confided it to ——. <sup>1</sup>

Our weather is again changed to perfect Summer. Really this russian climate is in my opinion not only supportable but very agreeable. The air is so clear at almost all times and it is so lawful to wrap oneself up in furs when cold that for my part I never will be amongst the growlers. I will go this moment & take one round of the grounds to bid them adieu. ’tis now a little past six and all the house is asleep.

The grounds are now in high beauty, & were it not for the prospect of perhaps returning home I should be griev’d to the heart at quitting Troitskoe, its river, its fresh air, its quiet and my leisure which might all be enjoy’d for another Month. I have pass’d this summer upon the whole very satisfactorily & lost but little of my time *for me*. So adieu Troitskoe, I doat upon you during the fine Weather, and hate & fear you when the nights are long & the days are gloomy for many a reason which I will not confide to this journal.

*Moscow. 25<sup>th</sup> Sp<sup>tr</sup> Monday*

“ . . . I have written to M<sup>r</sup> H[aws] and I am now waiting to learn my fate with sensations which I will not attempt to describe.

. . .

<sup>1</sup> Blank in MS. Probably to her executor, M. Nelidinsky Meletsky, since this was the identical copy which passed into the Woronzow archives and was subsequently published. See *Archiv Vorontsov*, vol. xxi, Moscow, 1881.



Yesterday I read to amuse me in the Carriage a book which Cap<sup>tn</sup> Hamilton lent me & recommended with his usual enthusiasm, '*Les Voyages en Suisse*' by E. F. Lantier. It is a compleat Oglio. History, Fairytales, Heroism, Sentiment, death, Marriage, Sublimity of horror, flowers, Anecdotes, dissertations, all has its nitch in this Compound which sometimes is amusing & sometimes affected ; but 'tis an admirable travelling companion. Voltaire & a great number of celebrated Characters were the subjects of what I read yesterday. Speaking of Diderot the Author says that the Empress Katherine, hearing he lodg'd up 4 p<sup>r</sup> of stairs & had his Library on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor which was injurious to his asthmatic chest hired a suite of appartments for him on the first floor which enchanted him but which he liv'd only 12 days to enjoy. I ask'd the Princess if that was true. She say'd she had never heard it nor was it like the Empress's way of doing things, but that she could attest as a truth that Katherine on hearing that Diderot was not rich had purchas'd his Library on his own terms & named him her Librarian for life with a pension, that a year or 2 afterwards She order'd the pension *not to be paid* and in a few months after wrote to Diderot that feeling herself extremely shock'd at such *negligence* she sent him the Salary for 50 years to come, that such an accident might not happen again. This was the fortune he gave his daughter who he adored, and it must be own'd is a more imperial way of doing things than hiring a room on the first floor.

Another Imperial anecdote which the princess mention'd yesterday is this. Count Pannin (the Gen<sup>l</sup>) when a boy had a trick of making horrible grimaces. The Empress Anne was then on the throne. One day when passing thro' a Gallery where he stood Sentinel on duty She perceiv'd him as usual amusing himself *making faces*, and imagining it was at her She stopt, look'd at him furiously & would infallibly have order'd him to receive the knout & banishment to Siberia had not Prince Kurakin his cousin who was present & a sort of favorite explain'd the truth on perceiving the danger to which young Pannin was exposed.

I am writing in my atom of a garden for the day is warm as summer. I have rec<sup>d</sup> a note from M<sup>r</sup> Haws but I am not to know my fate till to-morrow at 11. The methodic little Man will not relieve my Nerves a moment sooner as 'tis post day, & to say the truth 'tis a respite, for I tremble at what must follow a *yes* and

yet I cannot wish to hear the word *no*. K[itty] says that any agitation is preferable to stagnation. May be so, but the ardent desire I have for the enjoyment of repose & certainty shews me that I am no means qualified to roll on the face of the Earth as I have been doing for 5 years ; but notwithstanding this I shall be enchanted to see Sweden if such is my fate. I'm convinc'd I should like the brave, honourable, *moral*, *virtuous* Swedes, for such is the character I hear of them. . . .

*Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> [September]*

“ All is arrang'd, & in three days I shall be gone. Great God how agitated I feel & how griev'd at parting with my beloved princess. No, it is inexplicable the kind of feel I have. But to be regular. \* On tuesday at 11 M<sup>r</sup> Haws call'd on me, but gave me no certain news respecting the Cottons. In the Eve<sup>g</sup> I went there & found that Nursing was going on ill, that herself was very delicate, in a word that they had given up all idea of going before Spring. This I wrote to M<sup>r</sup> H. requesting he would call on me ; he did so yesterday & told me that it would be a million of sins to lose the present opportunity, that M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Browne had got their passports & would be off immediately, & that if I could get to St Petersburg there would be no manner of doubt of my being able to get farther. I instantly wrote a letter to my beloved princess and she rec<sup>d</sup> the news better than I expected and as a thing she had some suspicion of. She had heard from M<sup>r</sup> Haws of ships being at Petersb. and likewise that after the English had taken a russ Frigate & blown up another ship, that Adm<sup>l</sup> Hood had sent English newspapers and I forget what else to Adm<sup>l</sup> Hannicoff, & that Adm<sup>l</sup> Hannicoff had sent from shore vegetables & fresh meat to Adm<sup>l</sup> Hood.<sup>1</sup> All this appearing wonderfully friendly added to my low spirits. The Princess began to suspect something so that the shock was less great ; in a word I had no objections to combat & really they would have been a million of times less painful than her tears, but the die is now cast. May the Almighty grant me success and some days of happiness for all I have gone thro' and the anguish which I indure this moment. I cannot

<sup>1</sup> Sir Samuel Hood, Bart. (1762-1814), English admiral. At this time he was one of the fleet under the command of Lord Gambier.

express what I feel for the Princess. A.P. who by the by sees & feels that I am right in going is in floods of tears & my sweet Daria Nicholovna is in the greatest woe.

A party to go to the Play at the new theatre & to see the troop of french actors lately arriv'd having been arrang'd for me I went not to disappoint the Princess. Besides neither she nor I wish to see each other almost from this moment, it is so painful to do so. The theatre is very pretty, the boxes open in the style of the English theatres instead of being seperated from each other by partitions of wood as is usual here. M<sup>me</sup> Fillis is an excellent Actrice & sings well, tho' her voice is infinitely less pleasing than Sundanoff's. The rest of the performers are very commonplace. We did not get home till past 12 o'clock, & I retir'd instantly to my room being unable to support longer the dreadful headache which I had & which I have indeed still tho' half the night I slept well. It is now very early in the Morning.

To add to my low spirits my beautiful little Dog who was growing so comical, so playful, & who began to know me & to amuse me excessively is suddenly declared *paraletic by inheritance*. Its fore feet are become weak, its beautiful bright eyes Watry, and I am assur'd it will die in a few weeks, tho' it is this moment full of life & so playful that it goes to my very heart to see it. I had so much pleasure in the idea of my little Russian Dog, of teaching it to know nothing but russ, & having a living memorial of a Country where so many years of my life have been spent, & in it a memorial of one of Princess D's great passions which is that for Dogs of the King Charles's breed, that I am griev'd to the heart.

This painful day is over. We din'd at Prince Mavrocordat's. The dear dear princess is so affecting in her tears that there's no looking at her without feeling one's heart & soul wrung to the quick. I went this Eve<sup>g</sup> to the Russ shop to buy a russ manufacture gown, but found nothing pretty except a remnant and a gown of it would cost 150 roubles or more.

*Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> [September]*

" Oh heavens what a day was yesterday. The Princess is so excessively interesting, she is so griev'd & so different from what I apprehended that I cannot support her suffering. I wish I was gone.

Sunday October 1<sup>st</sup> 1808,

SAVIDAVE, 108 *Versts* from Moscow

“ From the moment my journey was fix’d it was misery both to the Princess & to me to be together. Dinner pass’d however better than I expected. Prince Lobanoff had been to visit the Princess in the Morn<sup>g</sup> & his conversation had done her good ; he is Minister of Justice.<sup>1</sup> I had arrang’d to set out during the night with the intention of doing so much sooner. I’m sure my beloved princess suspected this & wish’d to be deceiv’d, for she went to repose for a wonder *after dinner* & I took the opportunity, having before rec<sup>d</sup> her dear Maternal embrace, of setting out & hurrying away accompany’d by Anna Petrovna Istlaineff and Dorothea Nicholovna Kotchetoff in M. de Postnicoff’s Chaise. At the moment of setting off Cap<sup>tn</sup> Hamilton having heard in the Morn<sup>g</sup> of my departure came half craz’d to bid adieu & to say I was doing the most imprudent thing in the World, that there was *no doubt* of Ships being in abundance for the Spring & every possibility of my not finding one *now*. As this was the exact opposite of what I had been taught to believe, I must own it vex’d as well as gave me great inquietude. One does not know what to believe amongst the variety of reports circulated & advices given. I had suppos’d from all I had heard from a number of people that if I lost this opportunity I might vainly wait for years for another. I had gone through all the anguish of giving anguish to my beloved princess & at the instant of stepping into the Carriage I am told that in all probability I shall have to return back again & that in the Spring there’s no doubt of my being able to go ! M<sup>me</sup> Hoggeir too who began at Troitskoe by recommending me wherever I went to be as *sudden* as possible in my resolution & who told me she did not believe people could get away in the Spring was the first to join Cap<sup>tn</sup> H. to wonder at the *suddenness* of my resolution, & at the instant I was stepping into the Carriage to recommend me to change my plan & stay. It was really cruel to sport in such a manner with

<sup>1</sup> Prince Jacob Lobanoff-Rostowsky (1760-1831), Russian politician. Later President of the Commission of Requests and Member of the Council of Empire. One of Alexander I’s most enlightened and popular ministers. He married Alexandrina Saltykoff. Their daughter Marie was grandmother of Princess Daschkaw’s heir, Count Ivan Woronzow-Daschkaw. See above, p. 304, note.

the feelings of the Princess, putting mine out of the question ; so telling her *out* before Cap<sup>tn</sup> H. what her former opinion had been I told her that it was then too late, that the die was now cast.

TWER, 164 *Versts from Moscow*

“ The 2 last Stations have been very heavy, the roads being nothing but sand. We have had rain & wind, & an accident having happen’d to the Calash I travel in we have been forced to stop for the night. Anna Petrovna & D. Kotchetoff conducted me yesterday Eve<sup>s</sup> as far as Prince Sibirsky’s on the Petersburg road. There they quitted me & I got into my Calash which is excellent, accompany’d by Arena & attended by Ignazio an Italien *Maitre d’Hôtel* who the princess had just hired & who appears to be a treasure at least on the road. I was followed by a Chariot with my two trunks & gonslee & Timothée to guard them. The night was heavenly & the moon brilliant. To-day the weather is very different & we have got on heavily.

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> [October]

VITCHNE VOLOTCHOKE, 310 *Versts from Moscow*

“ I have just dress’d myself in the same Apartment that I dress’d in more than 5 years ago when making the journey from St Petersburg to Moscow with Dr & Mr<sup>s</sup> Halliday. How different are my circumstances and feelings now ! This Vitchne Volotchoke appears to be one of the most animated towns between Moscow & Petersburg. The canal with all the barks passing backwards & forwards is what occasions this.

An accident having happen’d to my baggage Cart, we are stop’d on the high road. Fortunately the day is heavenly, & to lose as little time as possible I have taken my Journal & am sitting writing on a little mount of heath and wild thyme so highly perfumed that it is delightful. . . .

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> [October]

“ . . . We have the satisfaction of hearing that there are numbers of robbers round Novogorod where we hope to be this Eve<sup>s</sup> ! They are Militia deserters. . . . I have been walking this Morn<sup>g</sup> & conversing in italien with Ignazio. He ask’d me concerning the Catholicks of Ireland & then of Scotland, & speaking of public

education he told me that in Italy the Arts are encourag'd but the priests keep the Sciences to themselves & throw cold water on every appearance of Genius in the lower orders. This Man is intelligent, & it must be own'd (independent of my love for the italien language) that 'tis a great blessing to be attended by Ignazio instead of a russian servant.

. . . . .

*Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> [October]*

" Dined today at Novogorod in a sweet agreeable inn furnish'd with comforts & ornamented with beautiful English prints. I have not seen an Inn in Russia to compare to it. Half the house is new, & 'tis this half which is so agreeable.

This Morn<sup>g</sup> at Borniz in a deplorable little Inn I was surpris'd to find a portrait of field Marshal Munich<sup>1</sup> painted in oils & very near as good as the one which Princess Daschkaw has. I was surpris'd to see it & the Master of the house wonder'd how I knew the picture to be Munich's. On enquiring into its history he told me that his great uncle had served under Munich & rec'd the portrait from him as a mark of favor. The field Marshal now *oversees* the signing of passports of all the travellers to & from Petersburg, for such is the occupation of his Soldier's great nephew.

I sent my 3<sup>rd</sup> letter for Princess D. from Novogorod.

*Friday 6<sup>th</sup> [October]*

*2 o'clock. POMERANIA, within 90 Versts of Petersb.*

" My beautiful little Dog Krassota is dead. Yesterday it was all life & beauty & playfulness. I'm convinc'd we smother'd it with bed cloaths in the Calash during the Night. How sorry I am for the dear little Creature, it was getting better every hour & I believe its feet would have recover'd their strength in time. I have been crying my eyes out for it & Arena has been doing the same. We bury'd it at the foot of a beech tree. Many & many a

<sup>1</sup> Count Burkhard Munnich (1683-1767), Russian soldier and politician of German birth. Field-Marshal and President of the Council of War under the Empress Anne, in whose reign he annexed most of the Crimea and Moldavia to Russia at the expense of Turkey. After the revolution which placed Elizabeth on the throne in 1741 he was condemned to death but later reprieved and sent to Siberia, where he remained for twenty years. Catherine II recalled him at the beginning of her reign and appointed him to an administrative post but he died shortly afterwards.

moment's occupation & pleasure has this little creature afforded since we quitted Moscow. How griev'd I am to lose it, & in such a way too ! One more day & its journey would have been over.

While Krassota was lying dead in the Calash before my eyes at break of Day a number of Swedish Officers, prisoners, stopt in the Village we did to change Horses. Ignazio had been talking to some of them, & humanity suggested the idea of my telling them I was likely to be soon at Stockholm & might perhaps be able to inform their friends at least of their existence. With this intention I address'd myself to one of them who spoke french, but there was no time for writing & all that could be done was to get an address to an Officer, a Swede, who is at Petersburg & to whom I will certainly make the offer of taking letters & news of their existence by name at least, which I did imperfectly from the grief I was in for my little Dog & the hurry of merely speaking *en passant*. These Officers are going to Toula. The one I spoke to appears highly gentlemanlike. Most of them travel in Télégas—open Carts ; all were smoaking their pipes.

I am writing in a little Inn where the Mistress is a young woman much above the common in appearance. It seems she was married at 14 years of age to a french Man who was son to a french Master & a sort of under *Aide de Camp* to the Emperour. She says she was as happy with him as happy could be when on one of the confidential messages with which he was entrusted he caught a fever & died. The poor young creature was at that time little more than 17 & the Mother of 2 infants. For a year she nearly lost her reason. At last her health return'd, & she has had the prudence to return to her father who is a German & keep house for him as he has neither Wife nor other child alive. Since 'tis sure that everyone has Woes, it interests me to see how each person supports his load, & what it is made of.

*Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> [October].*

TZARSKO SELO, 22 *Versts* from S<sup>t</sup> P.

" This Village which was the *work* of Katherine 2<sup>nd</sup> & her favorite retreat becomes more and more interesting on that account. Every circumstance attending Katherine's Time begins to bear a sacred stamp already. We have stopt at the house of a babbling old Widow who has been talking of the days that were pass'd till she was oblig'd to wipe her eyes in the sleeve of her

gown. She told us likewise that during the 2 months that the Empress Eliz<sup>th</sup> was here this summer after the death of her Child she did a world of good, & that she is to spend sometime here every year. . . .

I have been extremely fortunate in the attendance of Ignazio. Alert, spirited & intelligent, it is a comfort to have to deal with such persons, besides the pleasure of speaking to him in italian. He was first intended by his parents for a priest & learnt a little latin & french as qualifications. At 15 he chang'd his mind in consequence of his Uncle coming from Russia & tempting him to try his fortune there. After some changes he enter'd as *Maître d'Hôtel* into the service of Soritch the Empress Kath's favourite <sup>1</sup> where he liv'd till Soritch's death, accompanied him into Poland, married a wife there who is a stage dancer at Moscow, then kept a fabrick of *Macarony*, then sold it to live with his wife at Moscow, & arriv'd there only 2 Months ago. Dr Shlagle who was Physician or rather a Surgeon in the House of Gen<sup>l</sup> Soritch when Ignazio was *Maître d'Hôtel* recommended him to the Princess & I trust she will have comfort in him. He has a son at the *School for Players* at Petersburg, a Child of 9 years old who is educating for the Stage. If I have time I'll go & see this institution which I had not heard of before.

We must now go & see the Pallace & gardens of Tzarsko Selo.

[*Later*] I have seen the entire. The Pallace is not very magnificent, but there are some agreeable Appartments in it.<sup>2</sup> One is call'd the Amber Apartment & all the Wall is emboss'd with Amber, another with Lapis lazuli, a 3<sup>rd</sup> is Chinese. The Church is likewise rich & handsome & there are several agreeable Cabinets, besides I don't know how many other splendid rooms. A little table of Mother of pearl struck me as one of the prettiest things there ; it was brought to the Empress Katherine by the Prince Potemkin, taken from the Turks ; the workmanship is perfect, &

<sup>1</sup> Simon Zoritch (1745-1799), Serbian adventurer and colonel in the Russian service. After some years of high favour at Court he was dismissed to the country in 1784 for complicity in a case of forged bank-notes.

<sup>2</sup> The Catherine Palace of Tsarskoye Selo was constructed about 1750 for the Empress Elizabeth by Rastrelli in rococo style. The famous Amber Room was originally executed by the architect Schlueter for the Prussian king Frederick I, who gave it as a present to Peter the Great. It was transferred to Tsarskoye Selo by Elizabeth.



there is nothing so delicate & so pretty as Mother of pearl. I ask'd to see the table on which Katherine wrote usually, & they shew'd me 3 in the Chinese Apartment which She employ'd indifferently. The grounds are not remarkable for beauty nor the Contrary ; they interest one as being often *walk'd* by Katherine. There are ponds there, but the fishes she used to feed are no longer tame. The grounds too are neglected. On the whole I was charm'd to see Tzarsko Selo & stay'd there above 2 hours walking about.

At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 3 o'clock we arrived at St Petersburg, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October 1808, & I am now waiting to see M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh & learn my fate. Countess Worontzow has given me a shock by telling me that Lord Douglas was 9 days making the passage from hence to Stockholm. Countess W. is all politeness & elegance & good-nature, her house is a perfection for cleanliness & comfort & abundance of all kinds.

I have rec<sup>d</sup> a letter from my beloved princess. She gives me the comfort of saying that tho' my departure goes to her heart & soul yet that I do my duty. This from her is even beyond my hopes. Dear Woman, She goes to my very Soul.

*Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> [October]*

"Heavens what a life do I lead of uncertainty, M<sup>rs</sup> Grives is gone to-day & had I arriv'd 4 days sooner as I expected I might have overtaken her ! At this instant I'm told that my going is next to impossible, & that even if I could that it is impossible for me to find a Maid Servant without which my embarking would be out of the question. What shall I do ? I have seen M<sup>r</sup> Browne but M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh not yet.

*Monday 9<sup>th</sup> [October]*

"Yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup> I saw M<sup>r</sup> Cavanaugh who pretty nearly confirm'd M<sup>r</sup> Browne's account so that I gave up the point in idea & went to the Countess Worontzow's drawingroom where I sang for her. We then drank tea & the Chevalier Vernun came. He is a fierce french Royalist & has been imprison'd under the present Govt for his principles ; he play'd chess & made me laugh heartily by his droll manner of doing so. A M<sup>me</sup> Bakooning came afterwards, a very *aimable* Woman. We sup'd & talk'd of Wars & Spain &c. &c. &c. till it was between one & 2 o'clock.

I got up this Morn<sup>g</sup> at 7 to wash my hair in the Neva Water.

Before it was dry Mr Rogerson call'd on me, good good Man. He gave me some friendly advice which I immediately resolv'd to adopt ; that was to remain here in all events for 2 or 3 weeks & see what might happen. We had a great deal of gossip, & on his leaving me I went to pay a visit to Mr<sup>s</sup> Browne when low & behold on the Quay I espy'd Mr John Halliday, stopt him, spoke to him, & in a word if I can only obtain my passport in a few days I have arrang'd all & under his protection I set off within a week for Riga & from thence sail for Sweden. If this happens great indeed will be by my luck. He understands 4 or 5 useful languages, is an everlasting traveller, never sick at sea, *at home* in Sweden, in a word he is all that is most desirable under such circumstances, & if I go with him, it will be not a little remarkable that my first journey in Russia was made with Dr Halliday & my last with his brother.

I have been to see Furioso & his 2 sisters dance the tight ropes this Eve<sup>g</sup>. It is wonderful but I have no desire to go a second time. Countess Worontzow took a box at the theatre & her sister the beautiful Princess Gallitzen (who by the by is one of my great favorites) came with us. On our return some visitors came, but as far as I can judge the matter these Evening open houses where the Mistress is Dress'd out at all points expecting Company & where it continually happens that a Straggler or two drops in & no more is of all the weary heavy stale flat & unprofitable methods of being pleasant & superfinely Elegant that every dullness invented ! & so I'll go to my repose.

*Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> [October]*

" All this Morn<sup>g</sup> was devoted to business. My note to Prince Kurakin <sup>1</sup> has at last been rec<sup>d</sup> and after reading it he sent it to his Lady the Princess Kurakin <sup>2</sup> (comical that my former suppos'd rival should be the person on whom depends in some measure my

<sup>1</sup> Prince Alexis Kurakin (1759-1829), Minister of the Interior. Later President of the Council of Empire. Had the reputation of being a clever and industrious but insincere politician who subordinated everything to his personal interests. As Governor of the Ukraine he introduced some valuable reforms.

<sup>2</sup> Princess Natalie Kurakin, *née* Golovine (1766-1831), wife of Prince Alexis Kurakin. Noted for her travels and musical abilities. Was a great friend of the artist Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun. Many years later (1822) she met Martha Wilmot, then Mrs. Bradford, at a ball in Vienna ; and, alluding in her diary to their previous acquaintance in Russia, she remarked that she was a person " qui jouait une espèce de rôle de le temps " (*Souvenirs des Voyages*, p. 342, Moscow, 1903).

going or staying in Russia !) & I am to call at 12 o'clock tomorrow to learn my fate.

Another thing which distress'd me this Morn<sup>g</sup> was that by an overgreat zeal in M<sup>r</sup> Haws a lodging was taken for me at a M<sup>r</sup> Reay's at the back of the English line, imagining that Countess W. was not in town & that I should be at a loss for a place to stop at on my arrival, as all the affair was so sudden that I had no time to make preparations beforehand. Immediately on the arrival of anyone at S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg. they must send to inform the Police of their name & residence. I did so of course naming Countess Worontzow's house on the Great Quay as the place of my abode. In the mean time my name has been publish'd in all the papers as living at M<sup>r</sup> Reay's, so that when my Certificate from the police comes to be ask'd for, it will appear that they have rec<sup>d</sup> my deposition as living in one place while the newspapers speak of me as living in another, & besides M<sup>r</sup> Reay is subject to pay a fine of 25 roubles a day for *publishing* me without having me to produce on enquiry. In order to arrange all this I wrote off to M. de Ballashoff Grand Master of Police requesting him to have the goodness to call on me which he has just done. It is he who has a certain air of Count Byland. He has most politely arrang'd the affair for me & beg'd I would address myself to him whenever he could be of any use.<sup>1</sup> It was M<sup>r</sup> Rowand who communicated this affair to me with a face as long as the house. Oh what a difference there is between Man & Man, & how I hate poltroons !

*Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> [October]*

" A young man Prince Menchikoff, Grandson or Great G<sup>d</sup> Son to the famous Prince Menchikoff, sup'd here yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup>. He is very pretty, very boyish, & appears to be a sweet goodhumour'd

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Dmitrievich Balashev (1770-1837), Russian soldier and politician. In 1808 he was appointed Chief of Police in St. Petersburg, and in the following year Military Governor. In 1810 he was put at the head of the Ministry of Police, a new ministry which had been formed from the Ministry of the Interior. In 1812 he accompanied the Czar to Vilna, and was sent by him to request Napoleon to withdraw his troops from Russian territory. His reply to Napoleon's enquiry about the roads leading to Moscow has become a classic : " Your Majesty, there are several roads leading to Moscow—one passes through Poltava ! " (Poltava was the scene of the total defeat of the Swedish king Charles XII and his army by Peter the Great in 1709). He served with Alexander I in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814, and was later made Governor of the Central Provinces.

Creature.<sup>1</sup> He has lately return'd from England & half joke half earnest I had some skirmishes with him on the subject of Eng<sup>d</sup>. He declares that all English Ladys dress infamously without taste or elegance & that the rage is to wear *black velvet shoes* and *pattins*, which compared to the french Women's white leather Slippers & light footsteps makes a sad contrast in disfavor of the English Women, & all that sort of folly. We laughed however. . . . I drank tea with Mme Tchitchagoff who is a very sweet creature. Oh how she longs to be in England again.

All this Morn<sup>g</sup> has been devoted to *affairs*. I call'd on Princess Kurakin according to appointment. She promis'd everything & was very polite, told me I must write to acquaint Prince Lobanoff, the Military Governor,<sup>2</sup> of my intention of going & that I had been publish'd in the papers, & that I must write the same thing to her husband Prince K. & send him the newspapers. This I did. In the mean time that most kind of human beings Mr Cavanaugh had prevail'd on Mr Long to take me under his wing, but he goes tomorrow. We then arrang'd that I should go instantly to Princess K. to see whether the ceremony of the 3<sup>rd</sup> publication could not be dispens'd with. She was all politeness and told me if it was within possibility it should be done, that the Prince was not then at home, but that she would send a note in the Eve<sup>g</sup> to say what success she had had. I have just rec<sup>d</sup> her note & find it is *impossible*, so there is a most lovely opportunity of going lost because my name cannot appear the 3<sup>rd</sup> time till friday—I who owe no being a Copik, who am universally known, who am a Lady, & for whom so many people interest themselves! . . .

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> [October]

"Yesterday I had business & torments in the Morning. Wrote to the Grand Master of Police to ask for an order to obtain the

<sup>1</sup> Prince Alexander Menchikoff (1789-1867), Russian soldier, politician and diplomat. His offensive conduct towards the Sultan when Ambassador at Constantinople accelerated the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854. He commanded the Russian army in the early months of the war; and the defeat at Alma was due to his incapacity. Proved of very mediocre ability in public affairs. He married Countess Anna Protassoff.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Dmitri Lobanoff-Rostowsky (1758-1838), Russian general. Had negotiated the peace with Napoleon in 1807. Later Governor of Livonia and Minister of Justice. Brother of Prince Jacob Lobanoff-Rostowsky, Minister of Justice.

Certificate of my *individuality* & quiet conduct & lord knows what from the town Major & Quarter Officer, obtain'd the order, & Ignazio is just gone to get the papers. . . .

This Morn<sup>g</sup> I have had a visit from Count Michel Worontzow, Count Simon's son, and a great deal of conversation.<sup>1</sup> Prince Menchikoff who has just pass'd in taking off his hat to salute me had *black velvet shoes* & *War* painted in his smile & I had the same thing. He has such a sunny chearful Countenance that 'tis a pleasure to look at him. I have rec<sup>d</sup> a letter from Cap<sup>tn</sup> Hamilton who is craz'd at my being gone & implores me to return. He has imparted all his fears to the dear princess who is in such a state as goes to my very heart but I am really angry against Cap<sup>tn</sup> H. for working up the Princess in such a manner.

*Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> [October]*

"I am in all the agonys of my passport. Mr Cavanaugh & Mr Halliday call'd on me yesterday Eve<sup>g</sup> to tell me that Mr H. has got his & literally is only waiting for me, but after this night he can wait no longer, & then two of the most lovely opportunitys that Mortal could have will be gone forever.

<sup>1</sup> Count Michael Simonovich Woronzow (1782-1856), later Prince; distinguished Field-Marshal and Governor of South Russia. Only son of Count Simon Woronzow, Russian Ambassador in London, by his wife Catherine, daughter of Admiral Alexis Seniavine. Served throughout the Napoleonic Wars, being severely wounded at the battle of Borodino, near Moscow, in 1812. After the peace he commanded a corps of the Russian army of occupation in France and was one of the Russian representatives at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818. As Governor of South Russia, which he became in 1823, he may be regarded as the real creator of Odessa and the benefactor of the Crimea. Built a beautiful and exotic palace at Alupka, by the Black Sea, where he was the first to promote steamship navigation. For his services during the Turkish campaigns in the reign of Nicholas I he was created Prince. Was extremely popular, particularly with his troops. "It was said of him that through the whole of South Russia you could talk to no man for half an hour without hearing his name, and never without a blessing," wrote his nephew Sydney Herbert. "He was one of the foremost of the public men in Europe, and a model of integrity and virtue in a corrupt Court and a corrupt country."

He married in 1819 Elizabeth, daughter of Count Xavier Branicki and grandniece of Prince Potemkin, Catherine II's famous minister. They had four children, of whom two died in infancy. Of the remaining two, a son Simon (1823-1882) died without issue and a daughter Sophia (1823-1882) married Count Andrew Shuvalov, to whom the Woronzow titles and property now passed. The latter's daughter Elizabeth married her cousin Ilarion, son of Count Ivan Woronzow-Daschkaw. See above, p. 304, note.



PRINCE MICHAEL WORONZOW

GOVERNOR OF SOUTH RUSSIA

*From the portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence in the Hermitage Museum  
in Leningrad*



Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> [October]

“ And gone they are I much fear. Those cruel most cruel ceremonies & forms & carelessness and I know not what will make me lose this Season, this opportunity & give both the Princess and me a renewal of all the misery of separation if indeed the power of going exists next Spring. I have been advertiz’d 3 times, I have got my Certificate from the police, I have sent it in form to the Military Governor Prince Lobanoff, & that *on friday*, & yesterday I rec<sup>d</sup> a note from Princess Kurakin to say her husband could not give the Passport tho’ those papers were in his office, before next tuesday, & that without any apparent cause on Earth. In the mean time, the Season and the Opportunity passes, my anguish on the princess’s account is renew’d, all is to do over again, & I shall have my journey &c. &c. &c. for my pains!

Count Pallen spent yesterday Eve<sup>s</sup> here.<sup>1</sup> He is a most charming young man, his countenance is manly, candid & intelligent, his conversation spirited and sensible, he admires England, & that’s all I know about him except that he has no employment whatever under the Government. There were here likewise in the course of the Eve<sup>s</sup> Baron Bloom, Ambassador of Denmark, a young M. Lerashoff an officer, my dear excellent Baron Hoggeir who I delight in the sight of, and an Italien Governor of Malta, Caracioli a Neapolitan who has a most disagreeable face as ever I beheld. In the beginning the conversation was very fashionable & very frivolous, & what may be call’d dull foreign gossip without a grain of Attic Salt. No, I protest the dullness of *elegantes*’ when they get together is incomprehensible. There’s that lovely princess Gallitzen, clever, full of delicacy, spirit, taste, when she is alone here, & tho’ I find her by much the most agreeable member of society here, yet even she when involv’d in the fashionable cant becomes dull & unintelligible except to the little circle of *initiated* into the froth & fume of their atmosphere. . . . Italy, france, sometimes Eng<sup>d</sup>, the roads, the horses, the postillions, the Cooks, the Ministers, the *fracasées* & the *elegantées*, the pictures, Statues,

<sup>1</sup> Count Peter Pahlen (1778-1864), Russian soldier and diplomat. Son of Count Peter Pahlen, the minister who organised the conspiracy which resulted in the assassination of the Czar Paul I in 1801. Fought throughout the Napoleonic Wars and was promoted general. Later Russian Ambassador in Paris during the reign of Louis Philippe.



Milliners and Mantua Makers, foreign scandal brought to light, & that is all the Enlightenment my mind receives. My peasants at Troitskoe afforded me more to write about.

This Petersburg is most beautiful, I cannot tire of admiring it. . . . I never saw so beautiful a town in my life, nor so clean, nor so fresh & pure. The Weather is heavenly. Princess M. de Sherbatoff comes continually to see me.

Huzza ! huzza ! M<sup>r</sup> Halliday has some other formality to go thro' & his going is defer'd to Tuesday. He & M<sup>r</sup> Rowand have just been here.

*Sunday Night*

" . . . At Countess Worontzow's after dinner I saw Egoroff the famous russ painter.<sup>1</sup> He is a very ugly ignoble looking little Man, but when he speaks his eyes are full of spirit and his countenance becomes all animation. Princess Gallitzen & I had a long conversation on the immortality of the Soul in which Egoroff took part from time to time declaring he believ'd himself belov'd of God, but some folly & nonsense against the Soul's immortality. The P. Gallitzen I admire more & more every time I see here ; she is just as good as she is beautiful with the sweetest expression of face & the most unaffected sensibility. . . .

*Monday Morn<sup>g</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> [October]*

" I have been sitting to-day for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time to get my likeness taken for my beloved Princess. Everything respecting my voyage with M<sup>r</sup> Halliday appears so prosperous that quitting Russia I feel as if I was quitting my beloved princess, and I am so nervous & low spirited that I have no words to express it. My picture will not be the better for this. The painter's name is Huber ; he is a Swiss, a little fright of a being but affecting to be gallant.<sup>2</sup> He is

<sup>1</sup>Alexis Egoroff (1776-1851), Russian artist and member of the Academy at St Petersburg. Was a Calmuck who had been brought up by the Cossacks and sent to the Foundling Institute in Moscow. As a youth showed great aptitude for drawing and was sent by his patrons to study in Italy, where his work won the admiration of Canova. He returned to Russia in 1807 and became drawing master to the Empress Elizabeth. The Czar Alexander I proclaimed him *célèbre* for having painted in less than a month at Tsarskoye Selo his allegorical work "The Triumph of Peace." Among those whose portraits he painted was the beautiful Princess Eudoxie Galitzen mentioned above (reproduced facing p. 174).

<sup>2</sup> Jean Huber (1754-1829), Swiss painter and engraver. He specialised in the painting of animals.

really Comical. He intends to go to Moscow & has promis'd to take Mashinka's likeness for me in my Album which I'm oblig'd to leave behind. At the moment she is in disgrace with her frock taken off, her beautiful little neck & shoulders seen, with a book on her knees & a thread tying her to a Chair while she is seated on her own little workbox.

*Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> [October]*

" . . . I am in continual hot water on the subject of my passport. On sending this Morn<sup>g</sup> expecting to get it, it was as if Nobody had every heard of it before. One person was gone out to hunt for his amusement, another was unwell, in a word nobody knew anything of the matter, & here I am little further advanc'd than I was the first day. I have written to Prince Kurakin. . . . Oh I am assured he will let me have it at 8 tomorrow morning. Mr Halliday has found out a Ship at Cronstadt & we shall probably sail tomorrow Night. I was a Stouter Sailor 5 years ago, but my heart is as heavy as lead quitting the Country of my Russian Mother. Great God, how low spirited I feel ; indeed I am far from well. . . .

### PERSONAL NARRATIVE BY MARTHA WILMOT OF HER JOURNEY FROM RUSSIA TO ENGLAND<sup>1</sup>

" During all this time, Mr. Cavanaugh was my kind and active friend ; every preparation was made, and on the 19th of October I was to quit Petersburg and repair to Cronstadt, where the shiping lay ;—when, the very evening before my departure, he called on me and told me I must exert my courage, as he was going to mention a most singular and embarrassing occurrence. He said that a friend of his, an official person, had called on him three times that morning while he was out ; and being struck by the perseverance of his visits, he had written him a note, which was followed by another call on the part of the gentleman, who had only just quitted him. After informing Mr. C[avanaugh] that, as he understood him to be Miss W.'s friend, he could not resist cautioning him that, although her passport was given to her, yet, as government

<sup>1</sup> The following account originally formed part of a letter written by Martha Wilmot (then Mrs. Bradford) to her friend Lord Glenbervie in 1813. See *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, ii, 215 *et seq.*

had received intelligence that she was taking papers of consequence out of the country, three officers had been appointed to be ready to follow her,—one to the port of Cronstadt, the second to Narva, and the third to Riga, with power to stop her at whichever port she purposed sailing from, and there to examine in the minutest manner all her baggage ; that government had a very suspicious eye upon her ; and that, as his friend, he recommended him not to escort her any part of the way, nor appear interested about her.

Papers I certainly had, for I had the princess's memoir in her own handwriting, copies of the correspondence between her and Catherine the Second, besides some other papers, and several letters from different individuals in Russia to their friends in England. I was obliged to unpack a trunk to get at these ; and Mr. Cavanaugh made them up into a separate packet, which he sent off to the ship on board of which I had taken a passage, desiring that it might be put into one of the sailor's chests. I reserved the letters in my writing-case, to send back, or destroy, or open, according to circumstances. I then glanced my eyes over the little collection of private papers which I had, and left them to their fate, thinking them perfectly harmless. Amongst these was the collection of French exercises corrected by the princess, and amongst them *one* which, for want of something better to write about, told of a start which a little mouse had given me, by running up the sleeve of my gown, when I took it by the tail to avoid treading on it. At the end of this note, which was longer than usual, the princess had complimented me on my improvement in writing ; but said that, in sparing the life of the little mouse, I had exercised a false species of mercy, as the race multiplied so rapidly that it was become a serious evil, &c. My reason for noticing this trifling circumstance will be seen hereafter. This packet filled up one corner of a very small red work-trunk, which contained my ornaments, and nothing else besides.

These little arrangements being made, my heavy baggage was all sent off by water, as Mr. Cavanaugh had previously directed ; and conscious of having nothing to fear, I returned to a large party at Madame de Worontzow's. On the following day I bade her adieu, and slept that night at Oranienbaum.

Early the next morning, as we were preparing to cross over to Cronstadt, while I was gazing at the palace, my maid remarked a

gentleman who appeared to watch our movements, and as we stepped into the boat this same stranger was ready to offer his assistance. In the course of the passage, he contrived to address me in French, in Italian, and in English, sometimes deploring the war, and at others, praising my country,—till the roughness of the water made me perfectly insensible to all his observations.

I lost sight of my companion on landing, which was early enough to allow of my sharing Mr. Haliday's breakfast, who had arrived the day before, and was waiting for me. In the course of the morning, Mr. Cavanaugh came, and we began to think it a false alarm on the part of his friend, as all my baggage was already passed through the custom-house, and had the government seals affixed to it. He did not quit us till four o'clock, and then went away delighted at the idea that all was quiet. In the evening, however, the English agent came, pale and terrified, to demand, in the name of M. de Kaisaroff, Conseiller de la Cour,<sup>1</sup> a small red trunk, missing from amongst the baggage which he had seen with me in the morning. The poor man described the whole town to be in a state of consternation, as the gentleman seemed to have great power, and that he had taken off the government seals from all my trunks, setting aside the authority of the collector of the custom-house entirely. Of course I sent the little trunk, and awaited my fate very patiently. It was returned to me in three hours, with a message to say that M. de Kaisaroff would request to have it again in the evening.

During several following mornings, my clothes and baggage in the custom-house were ransacked without mercy; and as I happened to have a good many papers and letters, the collection of five years all of which he was upon oath to read, as well as my manuscript music, and translations of Russian songs, and twenty little follies, into a language which he understood but imperfectly, he had a far more troublesome undertaking, and one less profitable, than he could have anticipated.

<sup>1</sup> Michael Kaisaroff (1780-1825), an official in the police department of the Ministry of the Interior. Had previously served in the College of Foreign Affairs. In 1803 he accompanied the Rev. Arthur Young, son of the celebrated traveller and agriculturalist, on his tour through Russia and they examined local industrial conditions together. Later served in the Ministry of Police. An authority on agricultural questions. He translated the works of several English writers (including Sterne) into Russian.

I was resolved not to let him suppose that I felt alarmed, and I therefore invited him to come and visit me, and afterwards to dine at a species of table-d'hôte which the English had there. He came of course, and I immediately spoke to him in the most fearless manner of what was going forward, naming him my *chambellan de service*, and *confident malgré moi*. I never could exactly discover whether he was my friend or my enemy ; he certainly was the first in manner, and, as far as I could judge, in conduct ; but I was told otherwise, and particularly that he had recommended all the captains to refuse me a passage on board their ships. In truth, I became rather a dangerous cargo ; for the poor captain who had engaged to take Mr. Haliday and myself had soon a special visit to his ship where, in searching for papers, they found some sailors concealed, and this was near bringing him into a very serious dilemma. The captain, however, was a most kind, good-natured creature, and took so warmly to heart the idea of a young lady being under arrest, that he swore, with the gallantry of a true-born tar, that he would hazard his own life rather than leave her amongst barbarians, who had the heart to behave in so unmanly a way.

By a singular degree of good fortune, the Memoir, which actually was on board, escaped detection ; however, as a second visit was expected, it became necessary for the captain's safety to destroy it, or bring it on shore. I gave him permission to do whichever he found requisite, warning him that I preferred, of course, the latter alternative. He accordingly went on board before daylight, put the parcel under his large wrapping coat, and ordered his boat to return ; when, at the very moment he was about to descend the ship's side, a custom-house barge arrived with eleven men on board, who sprang into the ship and continued as guards in possession of her from that instant until she set sail. The captain remained a moment longer, ordering for their refreshment some London porter, and whilst they were drinking it, jumped into his boat, to which he had given a signal, and rowed to shore, where he delivered to me the parcel with an air of the most good-natured triumph.

That day I had a conference with M. de Kaissaroff, who told me, in reply to the questions which I asked him, that as yet he had not found anything to justify much alarm ; that it was true government supposed me the bearer of important secrets to Eng-

land, and that my political connexions were well known ; that from amongst my papers he had selected my music, not knowing exactly whether it was not a cypher, to which I had the key ; and likewise a certain paper, which he feared he should be obliged to lay before the government, for his imperial majesty to decide upon ; that in the meantime he would order an embargo on any ship I chose to name to secure my conveyance to England, and the rest might depart in peace.

I inquired what the paper was, and whether any person besides myself was involved ? He said, certainly, Princess Daschkaw was supposed to guide me in all those matters, but that he hoped nothing of consequence would be the result ; and at all events he was persuaded that I had nothing to fear. I now inquired with extreme alarm what the mysterious paper was ; and I felt that, if the dear princess were to get into any scrape by my imprudence, I should be wretched for life ; when lo, and behold ! out crept the little mouse !

I burst into a fit of laughter, and told him, without a moment's reflection, that he deserved to be left in his error, to punish him for the fright he had given me ; for that as surely as he took that paper back, to lay it seriously before the senate, he would become the jest of all Petersburg !

He looked dismayed in his turn ; and I then said that, as he had been polite and even good-natured in his conduct, I would tell him the simple fact ; and that as for my music, I could take an oath there was as much mystery in it as in the mouse, and no more.

I then told him what I have already related ; and though M. le conseiller thought proper to preserve an important air, and support his discernment at the expense of his candour, still I am convinced he was persuaded of the truth, and alarmed at the idea of becoming a subject of ridicule ; for he closed the affair by promising to read the paper a fourth time, and reflect on it more carefully. He spoke, however, of a letter which he had found without a signature, which he attributed to quite a different person from the one who wrote it, and he gave it an air of importance by placing it in a political point of view.

I explained this mystery likewise ; but not without a remark on the facility which he had shewn in so altering the meanings of things that guilt might be extracted from the most harmless lan-

guage, and how much I felt hurt at the species of examination to which I had been subjected. I said I pitied him for being made the involuntary instrument of what could not fail to be painful to any man of delicacy or feeling, and therefore my anger was not personal; that as for detaining any unfortunate captain an hour, I could not answer it to my conscience to do so, particularly at so advanced a season; and that as for quitting the country while the princess was in the remotest degree involved, it was what I should certainly never think of; therefore, all I requested was, that he would make up his mind as to my guilt or innocence, for that delay was one of the worst things that could happen.

I likewise spoke of the jailer who was seated, morning, noon, and night, opposite to my bed-chamber, whom I had seen, but not thought about, till my maid told me that my servants were exceedingly indignant at learning amongst their associates that he was placed there to guard me as a sort of prisoner, and to watch those who went in and out of my apartment. If the poor creature indeed did so, he must have done it by dreaming that all was right; for I never saw him awake by any chance.

M. de Kaisaroff, in reply, professed for me the highest interest, which he accounted for in having found amongst my papers some letters from the Princess Anne Daschkaw, (with whom he was well acquainted,) whose sentiments towards me confirmed the good opinion which he had conceived, and placed my character in the highest point of view; but he remarked that I must have some enemy in the country, and as he knew in common with everybody else the history of M<sup>me</sup> de Scherbenin, he turned my suspicion from that channel to fix it upon one whom I had till then thought to be my friend, and who has lately been a very conspicuous personage in Russia, a gentleman much in the princess's confidence, who had read her Memoir, with the dedication, and knew they were in my possession.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This "conspicuous personage" was undoubtedly Count Rostoptchin, who became celebrated by his conduct as Governor of Moscow in 1812. It is likely that he received the information that Martha Wilmot was bringing important papers away with her through Princess Daschkaw's friend Mme. Nebalsin (the "Marie Dmitrievna" of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*), with whom he was on intimate terms. This conjecture is supported by M. Shugurov in an interesting article in Russian entitled "Miss Wilmot and Princess Daschkaw," which appeared in the *Russky Archiv* (1880). See above, p. 105, note.

All this M. de Kaisaroff told me, and therefore he said he would ask me no questions ; but that he was upon oath to prevent my taking the Memoir out of the country, as well as every other paper relative to Russia, and that I might depend upon it he could do so ; he added, that he would endeavour to prove his respect and friendly intentions towards me by warning me that, even in case nothing should be found amongst my baggage, I must undergo a personal search before I quitted Russia ; and that as my servants would be liable to the same before they were permitted to return to Moscow, I had better be cautious what letters I sent by them ! I confess that my indignation was now excessive ; but as this warning could only be friendly, I thanked him sincerely, and he took his leave.

After he quitted me, my reflections were of rather a painful kind. The princess's safety was of course my first object ; and rather than expose the Memoir to the certainty of falling into other hands, and to I knew not what misconstructions, I determined upon destroying it. I burnt it accordingly, knowing that the copy which I had made was safely deposited in England by my sister, who took it with her.<sup>1</sup> That point decided, I made up my mind to return to Moscow, if the dear princess were to be in the slightest degree implicated in any misfortune, and share it with her for the remainder of my life. I wrote her a full account of everything, and sent it secretly. I then awaited the result, employing myself by breaking open the letters to Count Worontzow, to Lady Pembroke, to Madame Tchichagof's sister, and others, thinking myself a more lenient judge than M. Kaisaroff. One letter I sent back to its writer, the others I kept open ; one alone I would not presume to read—it was a love-letter ! from Princess Mary Sherbatoff to Mr. Kerr Porter ; and as I thought fire was its congenial element, I placed it on a pile of wood, and in the presence of several witnesses I saw it evaporate in pure flame. The parties are since married.

At the end of five days from the morning I arrived at Cronstadt, M. de Kaisaroff requested another audience, and then congrat-

<sup>1</sup>This copy, which contains corrections in the Princess's handwriting, is preserved in the British Museum (Additional MSS. 31911). From it Martha Wilmot, then Mrs. Bradford, prepared her edition of the *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw* published in 1840.



ulated me upon my entire acquittal. The music!—the mouse!—all were pronounced innocent; it was literally ‘the mountain in labour’; and I believe I laughingly said so, as I thanked my judge,—who, on his part, seemed particularly anxious that I should acquit him, on the score of gallantry, feeling, and so forth, requesting that I would write to the Princess Anne to that effect, which I accordingly did.

As the ship was that very day ready to sail, we determined to lose no time, but get on board as quickly as possible. Still, however, the personal search hung over me. We invited M. de Kaisaroff to dine with us and see us on board. He was engaged, but did not take leave, as he was to return before we set out. We therefore dined; and not finding that he came back, according to appointment, we proceeded to the ship, where I bade adieu to my faithful and excellent Irene, not without a pang of heartfelt regret, and to the men-servants, who were moved to tears, and full of indignation at what had passed. We embarked on the 26th of October, a beautiful autumnal evening. Every moment I expected M. de Kaisaroff; however, we weighed anchor, and had only one more obstacle to encounter—namely, passing the guard-ship.

There was a small brig in company with us. Both ship and brig were a mercantile concern, laden with hemp. This last, which was badly manned, was to follow our track, and be taken in tow in case of difficulty. On board of her was a Mr. Donovan, a super-cargo, a man who was tall and important-looking, with a gouty foot and yellow slippers; of singular irritability, nervous, and peculiarly alive to anything of the ridiculous. All this was on the surface,—the better qualities of his mind lay deeper. On his arrival in Russia, the officers of the guard-ship had purchased a pipe of wine from him, and still owed him fifty pounds. As we passed the guard-ship we observed the signal for lying to, while officers got on board each ship to sign papers and dismiss us. I was now convinced that M. de Kaisaroff would come on board, and most uncomfortable did I feel; when, to my great astonishment and delight, I found that no such person appeared, that the papers were signed with all possible dispatch, and in a few moments we were under weigh. The miracle was soon explained; for on looking at our neighbour the brig, we saw the unfortunate Mr. Dono-

van enduring the last hug of an officer who, in order to create a diversion whilst his companions were getting into their boat, overwhelmed him with embraces ; and then, in the energy of wishing him a safe passage, having trodden unmercifully on his unhappy foot, tripped away to his friends, leaving Mr. Donovan suffocated with rage at being so belaboured with kisses, and unable, between pain and want of breath, to demand his money, which they forgot to mention in the vehemence of their tender adieux ! I am afraid I laughed excessively, not only at the circumstance, but at its happening to the person I have described, whose keen sense of the ridiculous was such that he would rather have lost fifty pounds more in a manly way, than have been kissed so absurdly out of his present loss.\* However, thanks to this affair of the debt, we found that, after all, we might have taken anything whatever away with us, for the anxiety of the guard-ship to get us off exceeded ours to be gone ; and in a few minutes we lost sight of each other entirely.

The tumult of my mind during so long a period befriended the moment of departure ; but when I now seated myself quietly on deck, and saw the sun setting in majestic splendour for the last time over a country so long my home, and where some of the warmest affections of my heart still lingered, I felt an indescribable sensation of calm and melancholy, and I fell into a profound reverie, in which my ' Russian mother ' filled all my thoughts. I shall never forget being aroused from this reverie by the man at the helm beginning to sing an English song—music which I had not heard for above five years, and which at that moment brought with it a thousand affecting associations. It seemed to reproach me for the melancholy and regret in which I was absorbed, and to awaken the dear remembrance of home, of the friends I was now going to rejoin, and anticipation of the happiness yet in store for me. It was already a brilliant starlight night, and dreading the effects of my close cabin, I would not go down below. After walking the deck, therefore, till one o'clock, the good-natured captain had my bed brought up and spread within a coil of new cable, where, wrapped in the colours of the United States, and a parcel of sailors' coats, I laid down, and soon fell into a profound slumber.

I had been asleep just three hours, when I was suddenly awak-

ened by a most fearful shock, and a crash that appeared to me like the destruction of the universe. I started up, and instantly perceived a ship close upon ours, with sails, rigging, masts, and all, absolutely intertwined in each other. I stood mute and horror-struck, listening to what was said ; when I soon gathered, amidst the confusion of reproaches, orders, and imprecations, that we were in imminent danger, from the brig having mistaken in the dark the track we had made, and bearing down right upon us with the wind in her favour. The shock was so violent that it bore off the brig in a side direction to a considerable distance in a moment, where she cast anchor. In the next instant we felt the tremendous certainty of being wrecked by striking upon a rock, which was immediately followed by a second shock, that fixed the vessel, beating alternately stem and stern.

Poor Mr. Haliday, who had been in his berth, felt the well-known sensation, and came on deck, expecting a repetition of the scenes of misery which he had so recently witnessed and escaped. As for myself, in the first moment of danger, perhaps I could not well define my feelings ; and in the next, my mind was so worked up by the various emotions of the last few months, that I never did, and perhaps never may again, feel so little terror at the approach of death. I am surprised at myself ; for I perfectly well remember thanking the Almighty that I was alone, and feeling an elevation of thought which is far above my ordinary frame of mind. Perhaps I had never before acted so exclusively upon a principle of duty as in quitting Russia, nor more under the Divine influence through fervent prayer ; and I felt its consoling effects at that moment.

I had not time to weaken my mind by picturing to myself the misery of my friends ; for though the thought flashed upon me, yet hope very soon suspended all other feelings, and awakened the idea of being preserved. Providentially the night was fine, and the wind moderate ; our ship was coppered and well built. The captain had full possession of himself, and he gave us all confidence by his courage and presence of mind. The boats were unlashed and prepared in case of necessity ; but he recommended us to remain on board, if possible, till the morning dawned, lest we should be swamped amongst the breakers, in a part of the gulf of which he was totally ignorant, having mistaken his course in conse-

quence of the extinction of a beacon light. He then fired minute guns as long as his store of ammunition lasted ; and as he was greatly beloved, he prevailed on his crew to drink less freely than they usually do upon such occasions. He brought up all my baggage, and he saved the private property of every individual on board except his own, which he abandoned expressly, lest he should be suspected of neglecting any effort to save the ship and the property of his employers.

In this situation we remained from four o'clock, A.M., till eight, when it began to grow light enough to allow Mr. Donovan to come from the brig to offer its assistance. It was a sad sight for him, as all his property was embarked in this venture ; and he had made so many voyages in the poor *Maria*, that as he watched her broken masts, rudder, and planks, floating down the tide, and saw her all dismantled and disfigured, he declared it was like watching the last moments of a dying friend. When the morning allowed us to distinguish objects, we found ourselves in a more perilous state than we had even imagined. The part of the gulf in which we were was full of rocks ; and as the wind freshened, the breakers and swell of the sea were frightful. What we had supposed to be land during the night, proved to be large masses of rock rising out of the sea like islands, which could at best serve to shelter wild beasts ; and had we ventured into the boats in the first moment of confusion, there is scarcely a doubt but that we must have been lost. Every appearance threatened bad weather ; the minute guns only echoed back the melancholy tale of ' a ship in distress ' ; and as we gazed around on the scene of desolation, we could not perceive a chance of being saved, except in the brig which had caused our misfortune, and which was but a crazy vessel. We therefore quitted the *Maria*, and went on board the brig, resolving to make our situation known at Petersburg, and to return through Finland, if possible.

The minute guns, however, had been heard on shore, and to our great delight, we perceived two little boats approaching, just as we were beginning to lose all hope of assistance for the day. It was two o'clock, P.M., when they came alongside of us, rowed by equal numbers of women and men. They told us, in the Finnish language, that they came from a little island called Stamieux, just twenty versts from Fredericksham, which was the land nearest to it.

Mr. Haliday and I went immediately on board one of the little boats, and before we reached the island, the wind, which had been gradually rising, blew such a gale, that although we knew that the brig was in a very unsafe situation, and that we had promised to send a pilot to her assistance the moment we landed, yet no bribes could induce, and no persuasions could prevail upon, the islanders to encounter the storm. I do not recollect having at any period suffered so much misery. From one point of the island we could distinguish both the brig and the wreck; the latter was a melancholy picture of what the former was so soon likely to become, and I dreaded every moment seeing her go down, and every soul perish, without the possibility of affording them any assistance; while the poor sufferers on board must think us worse than savages, to forget them as soon as we were in safety ourselves. But the islanders were better judges of the matter than we were. Had they gone, their little boat could not have lived in such a surf, whereas, when at day-break the next morning I flew out to see what the storm had spared, I perceived the brig riding safely at anchor, but the poor *Maria* scarcely visible. That very day Captain Hughes, its late worthy commander, found his way on shore, accompanied by six of his brave sailors; and being acquainted with the horrors sometimes perpetrated in cases of shipwreck, he had armed his party, swearing that if he did not find us in safety, he would not leave a man, woman, or child alive in the island. The two first persons he met not giving him satisfactory answers to his questions by signs, his fury began to rise; and I know not what might have been the consequence had we not fortunately been walking in that direction and perceived him. When he saw us, he was so much overcome that he burst into tears, and not being able to command his feelings, he drew his rough hand across his face, cursing his 'eye-pumps, which were so leaky'. Had he put his threats into execution, he would have murdered such innocence and goodness of heart, such hospitality, and, to crown all, such apparent happiness, as I never met with in my life before.

A rosy young woman, who had helped to row our little boat from the brig, had conducted us to her mother's hut, the principal one of the place. It was a spacious room, and singularly picturesque inside, from being furnished with all sorts of fishing utensils, and nets hanging in festoons from the high roof of the apartment.

One casement window opened towards the rough ocean, and another towards a smooth little bay, where the brig soon lay at anchor. In this room the '*Mamma*,' as she was called, lived, surrounded by a numerous tribe, and was in some measure the queen of the island. She received us with genuine hospitality, made the large open stove blaze with a cheerful fire to dry and warm us, and produced her little store of milk and butter, which, together with black bread, and some tea that we brought with us, formed our supper. She then prepared the best bed for me, and to my surprise I found it of the softest down, with pillow-cases embroidered and trimmed with lace. There were two others, almost equally good, in the cottage, and we might have fancied ourselves still in our berths on board, when at night all the family disappeared into different recesses, or stoves, or cupboards, to sleep. At four o'clock in the morning, her son *Tuomas* came in with his boat from a neighbouring island: his arrival awoke the whole cottage. Up got the *Mamma*, and the old woman (her sister-in-law); up got the sister-in-law's daughter and her four children; up got the *Mamma's* daughter and her squalling child;—then came Maria and Sarah, the *Mamma's* unmarried daughters:—in a word, the room was soon crowded. They gathered round Thomas, heard his adventures, gave him his breakfast of raw salt fish, black bread, and sour milk, and then began the spinning wheels and the labour of the day, enlivened by stories, and smiles, and good humour. I never saw such industrious beings, nor creatures more apparently contented with their humble lot.

The *Mamma* understood Russ; and as soon as it was at all light I used to get up, and, attended by her, dress in a little offset to this common room: I then walked out; during which time the cottage was thoroughly cleaned, the windows opened, and our frugal breakfast prepared. On my return, I used to find all the family at their separate employments, and I often wished I could have drawn a sketch of the inside of the cottage, with the pretty groups into which they formed themselves. The *Mamma* was my delight. I tried to find out from her everything that I could relative to the state of a society in which she appeared to take the lead. She told me the population of the place was fifty-two souls, including men, women, and children. All their habits, manners, customs, and their religion, were such as had existed when they belonged

to Sweden; at present they were Russian subjects. She had another son, it appeared, at Fredericksham, learning to read, which they all could do without exception. A clergyman came to the island twice a-year, to instruct them in their religion, of which they appeared to understand the principles, and which, as well as I could judge, was Lutheran. There was a large bible in the cottage, of a very ancient date, in the Finnish language; and when Mr. Haliday read the words, though without comprehending them, their eyes sparkled with delight.

I was struck with a certain dignified simplicity in their mode of thinking, which, as far as one could judge, seemed to govern their actions in all things. When I opened my trunks in order to dry my clothes, we polished sharpers did not think it prudent for both of us to quit the room at the same time; indeed the various articles which composed my wardrobe strongly excited their curiosity and admiration. But when I selected different things as presents for the family, the *Mamma* answered in the name of all, in these words, as nearly as I can recollect:—

‘My child, you are very good, and we thank you; but these fine things are of no value to us; and you are going across the great water, where you have friends who will take pleasure in seeing you wear them!’

I argued the point as long as I could, declaring that I felt under obligation for her hospitality and kindness. She smiled at this, and told me it was true she had heard of wicked islanders by whom shipwrecked persons were treated barbarously; but that for their parts they thought ‘unfortunates’ were sent by God Almighty; and ‘surely’, she added, ‘if I were shipwrecked where you live, you would be kind to me’. I could not deny this; and she persisted in refusing every gift, till I offered them in the disguise of ‘keepsakes’; but she told me I must in return accept a keepsake from her, which of course I did.

Nature has been bountiful to these dear islanders in the gifts of strength and rustic beauty; the women in particular are well formed, and, thanks to their industry, remarkably well clothed. Their costume is Swedish. They labour at the oar, and manage the boats quite as well as the men; and I have seen them, after braving death in the rough blast, and exerting admirable courage and dexterity, haul their boats on shore, return to the cottage,

refresh themselves slightly, and, with the utmost simplicity, sit down to their spinning or knitting as if nothing had happened, whilst I, at a humble distance, looked upon them as heroines.

The island is a barren rock of granite, but so singularly diversified with groups of fir-trees, which force themselves a passage through broken masses of rock, and so beautiful by dimpling rivulets, by grottoes clothed in sea-weeds, by little creeks and bays, and all the variety of a beautifully indented shore, that on a fine day it looks like a sparkling gem in the ocean ; but there is not pasture even for one cow, nor have the inhabitants the slightest knowledge of rural labour or any rural enjoyment.

During the eight days we passed amongst these sons and daughters of the ocean, we had frequent visits from our friends on board the brig ; and finding that now she was manned by so able a crew she might make a passage to Sweden without danger, I consented to embark once more when the wind proved favourable. In the meantime, we had written to our friends in Russia, but fortunately we could not send out letters before this plan had been proposed. One day, after this arrangement, the captain came on shore, and laughingly told me that I had been the cause of a grand reform on board the brig, as he found that the sailors, after arranging a room for me on deck, well known by the name of the round house, had drawn up a set of rules for themselves, by which any man who swore an oath within hearing of '*the lady*'—who got into a passion—who talked loud—who used offensive language—who quarrelled with another—or, in short, offended against any of fourteen well defined articles, was to forfeit a shilling, or to receive a tap on the hand for each offence. The captain *swore out* that they were '*honest lads*' ; upon which one of the sailors very deliberately came forward and claimed the forfeit due for this offence against the first article ! The goodnatured captain paid it joyfully, though *the lady* was not within hearing, and was cheered by all the crew. The rules were written and hung up in a conspicuous place, remaining in full force during my stay on board.

On the eighth day after our arrival at Stamieux the wind changed, and we prepared for our departure, not without some little fears, and a great many regrets at bidding adieu to the innocent, happy islanders. I told the *Mamma* I should like to take her with me ;



and her answer was, 'Ah, you will have people enough to love you where you are going, without the old *Mamma*; and if she were to go, she would have nobody to love her but you; she would regret her children and the island; and you are too goodnatured not to feel sorry at seeing her always a stranger, for she is too old to learn your language'. At the moment of bidding her adieu she kissed me with affection, which I most sincerely returned, and her eyes filling with tears, she said, 'May God bless you, my dear child, and guide you safely over the great water; but pity me, for I shall never know it!' Just as we were getting under weigh, a boat hailed us; it was the dear old *Mamma*, who, having found a pocket-handkerchief belonging to me, immediately ordered out her boat, and, with the assistance of one of her daughters, rowed off to the ship, and was glad, she said, to take another look at us, and to tell me that she should pray for my safety and happiness. She lingered near us as long as it was possible, but we soon lost sight of her, and of the happy island.<sup>1</sup>

We had a pilot from Stamieux on board, but he only undertook to go a certain distance, when, he said, we must hoist a signal for another pilot from the island of Aspo, as he was not acquainted with the navigation of that part of the gulf, which was very dangerous. It was nearly four o'clock, P.M., and blowing rather fresh,

<sup>1</sup> The following extract from Martha Wilmot's diary for the year 1809 is of some interest as bearing on the shipwreck. It has been communicated to the editors through the kindness of Mrs Evelyn Marindin.

"Friday 27<sup>th</sup> [October 1809]. This day year I was shipwreck'd in the Gulph of Finland, and at this time was receiving hospitality from the innocent happy inhabitants of the Island of Stamieux in a Fisherman's Hut. May I never have cause to regret that Life was then spared to me. I shall never forget my feelings at that period. I did not fear to die, for in quitting Russia and the Maternal dear friend who I parted from with so much agony I had fulfill'd a great duty. I thought, and my mind was in the highest tone of happiness; I saw before me in my own Country amongst my friends a perspective of happiness where my imagination had full play. This was heightened by recent distress, and the singular circumstances which preceded my quitting Russia had raised my mind to such a degree that it was the very moment to be a Heroine and see even Death without terror. There are *such* moments in everybody's lives, I suppose. Coldly reflecting on what then pass'd, I shrink fearfully from dangers which appear'd less terrible at the moment, and I fervently pray that the life which was then spared may have been reserved for some good purpose, for had I resigned it then I should have died full of hope, full of *wishes* at least to be virtuous, but perhaps having tasted too few of the bitter dregs of life's cup, and certainly having had little opportunity to be useful. . . ."

when we discovered the island of Aspo, and hoisted the signal. To our dismay, no answering signal appeared. The pilot we had on board declared that he could not venture any further, and we fired a gun to attract pity, but in vain ! At length, we found ourselves so close to the rocks which guard this dangerous coast, that we were forced to drop our anchor at a moment's warning, or we should inevitably have been lost. Our anchor checked the ship from dashing against a rock, and gave us time to lower a boat, in which the captain landed in an instant, and compelled a pilot to come on board and take upon him the responsibility of the ship's safety,—which, when obliged to, he did with perfect ease, bringing her into safe anchorage in a few minutes. We then went on shore and found a sort of town, which, after the hamlet we had quitted, appeared to ~~us~~ quite magnificent, and crowded with inhabitants.

We were well received, and shewn to the best cottage in the place, which, though it appeared to be built with more refinement, was less clean and comfortable than the *Mamma's*. Mr. Haliday cooked our supper, which was a mess of soup ; and when this was served up by the master of the hut, to our surprise he produced a silver ladle, some silver spoons, and a candlestick, which was quite a curious piece of workmanship, opening into a pair, and evidently made for the accommodation of travellers accustomed to luxuries. This told a tale of no very cheering kind, and we began to think we had got upon one of the wicked islands of which the simple-hearted *Mamma* had heard. I took care not to open my trunks here, and we resolved to set sail as soon as possible. But the wind shifted right against us, and we were forced to make the best of it.

At Aspo I had a room to myself, but I slept on straw till I got my own bed from the ship. I had also an old woman to attend upon me, but poor Eva was far less agreeable than the *Mamma* ; indeed there was a striking difference in everything, except the nature of the islands ; and as we wandered over Aspo, we found it of the same description as Stamieux, only on a larger scale and more picturesque. The granite rocks were magnificent, and in many places detached fragments of an enormous size lay on the surface like pebbles. There was likewise a granite causeway, which measured four hundred of my usual steps in walking. This place commanded a superb view of almost all the island, of the ocean, and of distant land. One day we walked entirely across the

island, and I never saw anything more romantic. On the side where we had been forced to cast anchor, the sea roars, and dashes, and breaks into clouds of white spray; while on the opposite side, two harbours of smooth water, shaded round by trees, and from their tranquil character forming a strong contrast with the other, invite ships to seek for shelter; but they sometimes prove a treacherous lure, as the navigation is singularly difficult, being full of hidden rocks; and we had soon convincing proofs that the plunder of wrecks was a sort of livelihood to the inhabitants of Aspo, or at least one of the sweeteners of their lives.

Day after day passed, and the wind was still contrary. At length, however, it changed, but brought with it sleet and foul weather; another time we had snow. But when we saw our ship actually fast in ice, (as was the case one morning) we began seriously to despair of quitting Aspo for the whole winter; which was the more distressing as we had every chance of being short of provisions, with a great many men to feed.

In two days the frost disappeared, but the wind was against us. It was during this sort of anxious life that, one day as we were walking on the causeway, four ships appeared in the offing, in the utmost distress, with signals flying for pilots to go on board. Every man in the island was a pilot, but neither bribes nor remonstrances could prevail on one to go to the assistance of the unfortunate vessels, which appeared as if they were going to make a tack, which must have been their destruction. The islanders declared that it was the express law of the Emperor of Russia that they should not pilot any vessels into port during the war, of any description; with twenty other things equally false and inhuman. A crowd assembled on the causeway to watch the event, with feelings equally agitated, but from very opposite causes. Some of the islanders could scarcely restrain a shout of triumph (which, however, sparkled in their eyes) when destruction appeared inevitable. But, providentially, the first ship escaped the point of danger, found the channel, and sailed up in perfect safety!

The shout of triumph was ours,—the three other vessels had only to follow the track of the first, and it was clear they intended doing so. The imperial orders!—fear of punishment!—danger to the state!—all were forgotten in a moment; and perceiving that there was no longer any chance of plunder, three pilots put

out to sea in an instant, deeming it wiser to secure their fees, than to endure the mortification of losing everything after so fine a prospect. This happened on a Sunday ; and in the evening they assembled as usual, praying and singing psalms, with every appearance of devotion !

Three weeks passed away in this manner : our *fresh* meat was six weeks' old, the two cows (all that the island afforded) had long since ceased to give milk, and we were almost obliged to put ourselves upon an allowance ; while, thanks to the sea air and the healthful lives we led, our appetites were unusually keen. Our situation was becoming very uncomfortable, and the season was so far advanced, that the prospect of sailing down the gulf was most alarming. At length, on the 26th of November, both wind and weather appeared favourable, and on the 27th we got on board and set sail. I did not know the extreme danger we were in the first night, till we were congratulated on our escape the following morning. We were five days and nights in making our passage to Carlsrona, in Sweden, a fearful voyage, during which the captain remained every night on deck, exerting his utmost skill. We had frost, snow, and sleet, and we began to fear that the ropes would become unmanageable from the severity of the frost. More than once we imagined ourselves doomed to a Danish or a French prison, as privateers were frequently seen at a distance. The last alarm of this kind which we experienced was near Carlsrona, on the 2nd of December, when, at eight o'clock in the morning, three enemy's ships were descried. We made for the harbour as quickly as possible, and were perhaps too small to attract notice, particularly as a British man-of-war was stationed there. At eleven o'clock our anxieties were ended, and we experienced the blessing of coming on shore. Need I attempt to express it ?

At Carlsrona we met several of the captains of ships that we had left at Cronstadt, and we learned from them that Monsieur de Kaissaroff had quitted the town, leaving every one in repose, the day after we sailed ; but that orders had arrived on the following day to arrest our poor captain, on account of the men who were found on board the *Maria*.

We remained a few days at Carlsrona, to rest, and to procure a carriage to proceed on our journey. We then set off for Gottenburg, making a little circuit. We stopped for two days at Helsing-

burg, which was interesting at that time from its situation, being exactly opposite to Elsinour, with which place there was constant intercourse by means of flags of truce.

Some English frigates guarded the passage of the Sound. It was a very animated scene, and particularly interesting to us, as our poor companions were daily expected to pass in a large fleet, with convoy, and we did not know whether the exasperated Danes would not give them battle within sight of us. We saw nothing of them, however, and we proceeded on our journey, which we completed by arriving at Gottenburg on the 16th of December. On the 18th we again set sail, and after a tolerable passage considering the time of the year, (and one regular clearing out for battle, occasioned by a false alarm) we landed at Harwich on the 26th of December 1808.

### ENVOI

“ Written at Colchester the night of my arrival in Eng<sup>d</sup> after an absence of nearly 6 years—viz: Dec<sup>r</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> 1808.

“ If I have gone through a great many tryals, and if I have conducted myself in a way that my own heart & conscience approves, let me remember that my Vanity has perhaps secretly supported me. There were a hundred soothing motives to make me brave personal danger in the cause of friendship & of duty, but I was on a sort of theatre; a great public witness’d my acts; they judg’d them too, & often most wrongfully; but I felt that they were likewise scrutiniz’d by a lesser public, by those few whose approbation makes my pride & happiness, & I did everything in my power to merit it.

“ I am now returning to security from danger, to domestic retirement where perhaps my real tryals are only to begin. There the heart must seek the reward of its Virtues in the bosom of the Almighty alone, & in the obscure path of private life shine by its own heaven born lustre, or lie hid for want of vices such as vanity & ambition to call it into being.

“ Oh my God support me in the fervent desire & intention of my Soul to devote myself to Virtue & to thee, make my return home a blessing to my family & friends, give me the power & continual

wish to fulfill all my dutys as a Christian & a human creature, or take a life which is as yet guiltless of any great offence and which if preserved by thy mercy I implore thee to guard with thy virtue & crown with innocence, cheerfulness its best companion, & fortitude for daily unmark'd cankering Sorrows.

“ Amen.    Amen.”



# INDEX

- Academy of Arts and Sciences, xviii, 21 note, 25.  
 Adadouroff, Anne, 26 and note.  
 Adlercron, John, 289 and note.  
 Aldworth, Rogers, 66 and note.  
 Alexander I, Czar, xv, 21 note, 27 and note, 35 note, 214-15, 276 note, 302, 394 note.  
 Alupka, Palace of, xi, 392 note.  
 Amiens, Peace of, x, xvii.  
 Anderson, John, 4 and note.  
 Angerstein, John and Juliana, 332 and note.  
 Anglo-Irish relations, Princess Daschkaw on, 50, 84.  
 Anhalt-Zerbst, Prince, 143.  
 Anna Petrovna, *see* Islenieff.  
 Anne, Empress, 104 and note, 348-49, 358.  
 Anne Simonovna, *see* Daschkaw, Princess Anne.  
 ifeldt, Count, 360 and note.  
 Bakmeteff, Madame, 345 and note.  
 Bakunin, Michael, 113 and note, 121-22, 128.  
 Balashev, Alexander, 390 and note.  
 Bariatinsky, Prince Ivan, 263 and note, 265.  
 Bariatinsky, Prince Theodor, 52 note, 214 and note, 265.  
 Bashkirs, 287-88.  
 Baths, 94, 203.  
 Bear baiting, 152, 192.  
 Bees, wild, 123, 125.  
 Bekleshev, Alexander, 215 and note, 376.  
 Bells, King of, 152 and note.  
 Bentham, Sir Samuel, 290 and note, 300.  
 Besborodko, Count, 23 note.  
 Bradford, Catherine, 48 note, 274 note.  
 Bradford, Mrs., *see* Wilmot, Martha.  
 Bradford, Sir Thomas, 121 and note.  
 Bradford, Rev. William, xxiv, 121 note.  
 Bristol, Lord, xxi.  
 British Museum, 270 note, 401 note.  
 Bruce Castle, 9 note, 150.  
 Bruce, Countess, 214 note.  
 Burghersh, Lord, 138 and note.  
 Butler, Lady Eleanor, 6 and note.  
 Buturlin, Count Alexander, 284 note.  
 Buturlin, Count Dmitri, 283 and note, 291 note.  
 Buturlin, Count Peter, 283 note.  
 Buturlin, Count Petrusio, 368 and note.  
 Buturlin, Countess Anna, *née* Woronzow, 283 and note, 291, 323.  
 Calmucks, 82, 140.  
 Carnwath, Thomas, 10th Earl of, 15 note.  
 Carysfort, Lord, 10 and note, 167 note.  
 Cathcart, Lord, 307 and note.  
 Catherine I, Empress, 25 note, 357 and note.  
 Catherine II, Empress, xv, xviii, 20 note, 28 note, 29 note, 46 note, 51 note, 52 and note, 59 note, 71 note, 77 note, 100, 143-45, 156, 157 note, 159, 206, 229, 272, 303, 366, 380, 385 note, 386.  
 Chetwood, Anna, 30 and note.  
 Chetwood, Elizabeth, *see* Wilmot.  
 Chetwood, Henrietta, 179 and note.  
 Chetwood, Rev. John, xvii, 30 note, 226 and note, 273 note.  
 Chetwood, Knightley, xvii, 226 note.  
 China, Emperor of, 148.



- Christian VII, King of Denmark, 358 and note.  
 Christina, Queen of Sweden, 368 and note.  
 Climate, Russian, 191.  
 Constantine, Grand Duke, 329 and note.  
 Copenhagen, xxiii, 17 note, 19, 166, 257, 307.  
 Copley, Alice, 8 and note.  
 Copley, Thomas, 8 note, 9, 10.  
 Cork, xvii, 3, 260 note.  
 Cossacks, 288.  
 Coxe, William, 150 and note.  
 Crichton, Doctor, 178 and note, 334.  
 Dancing, 99.  
 Daschkaw, Prince Michael, 20 note, 206 and note.  
 Daschkaw, Prince Paul, 20 note, 46 and note, 68, 74, 87-88, 93, 133-34, 193, 241-42.  
 Daschkaw, Princess Anne, *née* Alferoff, 46 note, 242-43, 286-87, 290, 327, 400, 401.  
 Daschkaw, Princess, *née* Countess Catherine Woronzow, xviii *et seq.*, 10 note, 20 and note, 41 note, 44 *et seq.*, 47 note, 52-54, 63, 79, 81, 84, 87-88, 90, 97, 99, 101, 102, 116, 122, 125-26, 132 and note, 135 and note, 144, 145 and note, 151, 153-56, 157 note, 159, 195 *et seq.*, 201-2, 211, 218, 220-21, 223, 269, 274 and note, 281, 310, 312-13, 325, 339, 342 note, 344, 349-50, 353-55, 360, 383. *See also* *Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*.  
 Denny, Lady Arabella, 21 note, 375 and note.  
 Diderot, 21 note, 141, 142 and note, 380.  
 Divoff, Adrian, 315, 318, 339 and note.  
 Dnieper, river, 111.  
 Dogs, mad, 305, 307-8.  
 Dolgorouky, Prince Basil, 302 and note.  
 Dolgorouky, Prince Youri, 20 note, 68 note, 321 and note.  
 Dolgorouky, Princess Varvara, 68 and note.  
 Doneraile, Viscount, 66 note.  
 Douglas, Lord, 291 and note, 331, 388.  
 Drennan, William, 46 note.  
 Dresses, native, 39.  
 Dublin, 4.  
 Easter, 97 *et seq.*  
 Eaton, Roger, 39 note, 311 note.  
 Egoroff, Alexis, 344 and note.  
 Elizabeth Alexeevna, Empress, 27 and note, 148 note, 171-72.  
 Elizabeth Petrovna, Empress, 148 note, 284 note, 321, 387 note.  
 Elizabeth, Queen of England, 42 and note.  
 Elsinore, 17-19, 165-66.  
 Emmet, Robert, 47 note.  
 Enghien, Duke of, 110 and note.  
 Eropkin, Peter, 77 and note.  
 Erskine, Thomas, 11 and note.  
 Falconet, 29 note.  
 Fashions, 26.  
 Field, John, 320 and note  
 Flattery, 55.  
 Food, 30, 188.  
 Fool, Russian family, 48, 347.  
 Forgery, 292, 306.  
 Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, 46 note, 52 note.  
 French influences, 60, 194-95, 275.  
 Friedland, battle of, 302.  
 Gagarine, Princess Natalie, 216 and note.  
 Galiano, Marquis, 371.  
 Galitzen, Prince Alexander, 67 and note, 76, 213, 314.  
 Galitzen, Prince Vladimir, 31 note.  
 Galitzen, Princess Eudoxie, 173 and notes, 389, 393, 394 and note.  
 Gambier, Admiral Lord, xxiii, 258 and note, 307.  
 Georgia, Archbishop of, 91-93.  
 Georgian princes, 236.  
 Glanmire, xvii, 179, 185.  
 Golovine, Countess Barbara, 177 and note.  
 Golovine, Natalie, *see* Kurakin, Princess.  
 Greek Church, 89, 146, 372.  
 Greig, Eugenie, 134 and note.

- Greig, Sir Samuel, 134 note, 315 and note.
- Halliday, Doctor, 29, 41, 43, 44, 73-74, 87, 134.
- Halliday, John, 329, 340, 342 and note, 389, 404 *et seq.*
- Hamilton, Captain, 370-71, 376, 383, 392.
- Hamilton, Mrs., xviii-xix, xxii, 4 and note, 5, 11, 50, 59, 104 note, 163, 203, 367-68.
- Handel, 47 note.
- Hannicoff, *see* Khanycoff.
- Harris, Hon. Thomas, 58 and note, 69, 77.
- Harrowby, Lord, 173, 174 note.
- Hastings, Lady Mary, 42 note.
- Hawkesbury, Lord, 11 and note.
- Hélène Pavlovna, Grand Duchess, 65 and note.
- Helsingborg, 165.
- Herbert, Sydney, Lord, 13 note, 392 note.
- Hermitage Museum, 28 and note, 332-33.
- Herzen, Alexander, xxv-xxvi, 70 note.
- Hoan, Mme., 112, 115, 117, 123.
- Hoggier, Baron, 157 note, 249-50, 251, 252, 254, 335.
- Hoggier, Baroness, *née* Poliansky, 157 note, 249 and note, 253, 254, 289, 335, 383.
- Hood, Admiral Sir Samuel, 381 and note.
- Hovansky, Prince, 266.
- Huber, Jean, 141 and note, 142, 394 and note.
- Hutchinson, General, 296 and note.
- Ice hilling, 86.
- Islenieff, Anna Petrovna, 48 and note, 87, 93, 97, 118, 124, 284, 304, 309, 323, 339, 383-84.
- Ivan IV (the Terrible), Czar, 41-42 and notes.
- Ivan VI, Czar, 144 and note.
- Jews, 110 *et seq.*
- Jones, Sir William, 358 and note.
- Kaisaroff, Michael, 397 and note, 398 *et seq.*
- Kauffmann, Angelica, xxi, 316 and note.
- Khanycoff, Admiral, 21 and note, 167, 381.
- Kirwan, Dean, 5 and note.
- Klüpfel, Baroness, 67 note, 76 note.
- Korsikoff, *see* Rimsky-Korsakoff.
- Kotchubey, 233 note, 298.
- Kremlin, 91, 151, 222, 290.
- Krouglo, 107 and note.
- Kurakin, Prince Alexis, 389 and note, 395.
- Kurakin, Princess Natalie, *née* Golovine, 64, 389 and note, 393.
- Kutusow, General, 105 note, 171 and note.
- Latham, Anne, 241 and note.
- Lecky, Elizabeth, 274 note.
- Lecky, Isabella, 15 note, 274 note.
- Lecky, John Hartpole, 15 note.
- Lecky, W. E. H., ix, 15 note, 274 note.
- Lent, 86.
- Leslie, C. P., 4 note.
- Leveson-Gower, Lord Granville, 173 and note, 174, 175 note, 291.
- Listowel, William, 1st Earl of, 66 note, 241 note, 311 note.
- Litzen, Mlle, 69, 76, 86.
- Llangollen, 6-7.
- Lobanoff-Rostowsky, Prince Dmitri, 335, 391 and note.
- Lobanoff-Rostowsky, Prince Jacob, 383 and note.
- Londonderry, Frances Anne, Lady, ix.
- Loptoff, General, 301 and note, 317, 319, 324 *et seq.*, 373.
- Malinowsky, A. F., 48 note.
- Maria Feodorovna, Dowager Empress, 34 and note, 36, 164, 177-78, 269 and note.
- Mavrocordato, Prince and Princess, 64 and note, 66 note, 72, 87, 382.
- Memoirs of Princess Daschkaw*, xx-xxi, xxiii, xxiv, 79, 142 note, 152, 155, 267, 272, 375 note, 401 and note.
- Menchikoff, Prince Alexander, 390, 391 and note.
- Merlin, Madame, 44 and note.

- Military power, 235.  
 Mirovich, 144 and note, 145.  
 Moghilev, 113.  
 Moore, Rev. Charles, xvii, 47 note.  
 Morals, 289, 294.  
 Mordvinov, Admiral, 276 and note.  
 Moscow, 44, 63, 74, 105 note, 151,  
 192-93, 211 *et seq.*, 222-23, 226,  
 247, 273.  
 Mount Cashell, Lord and Lady, x,  
 xvii, xxi, 50 and note.  
 Munnich, Marshal, 385 and note.  
 Music, 99, 225.  
  
 Nadir Shah, 357, 358 and note.  
 Napoleon, xxi, 11 note, 300, 302,  
 390 note.  
 Narishkin, Alexander, 317 and  
 note.  
 Narishkin, Anne, 105 and note,  
 294.  
 Narishkin, Cyril, 304 note.  
 Narishkin, Marie, 27 note.  
 Narishkin, M., 295-96.  
 Nebalsin, Madame, 73 and note,  
 76, 81, 105 note, 144, 195, 227,  
 268 and note, 271, 338.  
 Nelidinsky Meletsky, M., 379 note.  
 Nelson, Admiral Lord, 17 note, 19.  
 Nesvitsky, Prince, 214 and note.  
 Neva, river, 22, 31, 253.  
 Nicholas, Grand Duke, later Czar,  
 13 note, 35 note, 329 note, 332.  
 Nobility, power of, 224.  
 Novgorod, 41, 70 note, 385.  
  
 Oginsky, Count, 107 note.  
 Oliver, Rev. John, 4, 5 note.  
 Oliver, Susan, 4, 5 note.  
 Orloff, Count Alexis, xxi, 52 note,  
 67 and note, 68, 213-14, 266,  
 314-15, 345.  
 Orloff, Count and Countess Ivan,  
 344 and note.  
 Orloff, Count Vladimir, 345 and  
 note, 362.  
 Orloff, Countess Anne, 68, 70 and  
 note, 86, 266, 315, 344-46, 360-  
 61.  
 Orloff, Prince Gregory, 52 notes,  
 59 and note, 67 note, 170 note,  
 214 note.  
 Orloff diamond, 60 note.  
 Orsha, 112.  
  
 Ostermann, Count, 213 and note,  
 314.  
 Oxford, 8.  
  
 Pahlen, Count, 51 note, 167 note,  
 393 and note.  
 Palm Sunday, 96.  
 Panin, Count, 145 and note, 380.  
 Paskevich, Prince, 304 note.  
 Paul I, Czar, xix, 21 note, 34 note,  
 46 note, 51 and note, 107 note.  
 Peace celebrations, 250, 299-301.  
 Pembroke, Countess, *see* Woron-  
 zow, Countess Catherine.  
 Pembroke, George, 11th Earl of,  
 13 note, 150 note, 289 note.  
 Peter and Paul, fortress, 104 and  
 note, 250.  
 Peterhof, 33 *et seq.*, 164, 256.  
 Peter the Great, statue of, 29 and  
 note, 30, 181.  
 Peter I (the Great), Czar, xv, 100,  
 101 and note, 102, 104 note, 229,  
 231, 311 note, 350, 357 note,  
 390 note.  
 Peter II, Czar, 104 notes.  
 Peter III, Czar, 20 note, 52 and  
 note, 67 note, 157 and note, 158,  
 213, 214 note.  
 Photius, archimandrite, 70 note.  
 Pisireff, Mlle., 267-68.  
 Pissemsky, 42 note.  
 Pitcairn, David, 5 and note.  
 Pius VII, Pope, xxi.  
 Platoff, General, xx, 288 note.  
 Platon, archimandrite, 229 and  
 note.  
 Poinsett, Joel, 291 and note.  
 Poland, 110 *et seq.*, 120 note.  
 Poliansky, Colonel Alexander, 23  
 note, 32, 35, 157 note, 330.  
 Poliansky, M. Alexander, 23 note,  
 157 note.  
 Poliansky, Elizabeth, *née* Ribeau-  
 pierre, 20, 23 and note, 24, 32 *et*  
*seq.*, 37, 40, 157 note, 181, 287,  
 289, 332.  
 Poliansky, Elizabeth, *née* Woron-  
 zow, 23 note, 52 note, 157 and  
 note, 158.  
 Pollen, Colonel and Mrs., 320,  
 329, 340 *et seq.*  
 Poniatowsky, Stanislaus, 156 and  
 note, 157-58

- Ponsonby, Sarah, 6.  
 Ponsonby, Hon. William, 175 and note.  
 Pontrominskoff, Prince, 80.  
 Porter, Sir Robert, 290 note, 333 and note, 401.  
 Potemkin, Prince, 46 note, 392 note.  
 Potocka, Countess, 291 note.  
 Priser, Baroness, 268.  
 Prosorowsky, Countess, 172 and note, 177.  
 Protassoff, Countess, 170 and note, 171.  
 Pugacheff, 25 note, 363 and note, 364 *et seq.*  
 Punishment of servants, 282 and note.  
 Pushkin, Count, 86 and note.  
 Quass, 39 and note, 191.  
 Rastrelli, 28 note, 152 note, 178 note, 387 note.  
 Razumowsky, Countess, 232, 233 and note.  
 Reed, Mrs., 136.  
 Religion, Princess Daschkaw on, 118, 131, 313 and note.  
 Religious feasts, 127.  
 Religious images, 346, 373.  
 Ribeaupierre, Agrippine, 25 and note, 31, 32 note, 33, 34, 81.  
 Ribeaupierre, Alexander, 32 and note.  
 Ribeaupierre, Ivan, 23 note, 25 note, 32 note, 35.  
 Rimsky-Korsakoff, Ivan, 214 and note.  
 Rogers of Lota, family of, 47 and note.  
 Rogerson, Doctor, 20, 22, 23 and note, 25, 46, 81, 330, 333, 342 note.  
 Roscolnics, 237, 248.  
 Rostoff, 231.  
 Rostoptchin, Count, 74 note, 105 and note, 144, 216 note, 268 note, 400 note.  
 Rousseau, 142.  
 Royal Irish Academy, ix, 155 note, 198 note, 274 note.  
 Royston, Lord, 291 and note, 329-30, 339 *et seq.*  
 Rumianzoff, Count, 298, 312 and note, 324, 331.  
 Russia, description of, 223-24.  
 Russian characteristics, 75, 95-96.  
 Ryder, Alicia, *née* Wilmot, xvi, xviii, 4 note, 174 note.  
 Ryder, Rev. Charles, 4 and note, 5.  
 Ryder, John, Archbishop, xvi, xviii, 4 note, 104 note, 174 note.  
 Santy, Count, 64 note, 66 and note, 87, 208.  
 Scherbatoft, Princess, 290 and note, 333 note, 334, 401.  
 Scherbenin, Madame, *née* Daschkaw, 20 note, 172 and note, 173, 242, 271, 277-79, 281-82, 285 and note, 287, 290, 299, 312, 313.  
 Schlueter, 387 note.  
 Serpukhov, 41 note, 63, 88, 359.  
 Shelburne, Lord, 375 note.  
 Shuvalov, Count, 392 note.  
 Sibirsky, Prince, 264 and note.  
 Sibirsky, Princess, 193.  
 Slaves, 147, 282 and note.  
 Smolensk, 128-29.  
 Smolny Institute, 35 note.  
 Somerton, Lord, 289 and note, 318, 334.  
 Speransky, 276 note.  
 Stamieux, 405 *et seq.*  
 Steding, Baron, 333, 376.  
 Stratford-on-Avon, 7.  
 Stroganoff, Count Alexander, 148 note, 178 note.  
 Stroganoff, Count Paul, 148 note, 178 note.  
 Stroganoff, Countess Anna, *née* Woronzow, 148 note, 178 note.  
 Stroganoff Palace, 178.  
 Stuart, Sir Charles, 174 and note.  
 St. Petersburg, 22 *et seq.*, 101 note, 168 *et seq.*, 252-53, 393-94.  
 Superstition, 286, 373.  
 Surmine, Ivan, 20 note.  
 Surmine, Martha, later Daschkaw, 20 note, 158, 321 and note.  
 Sussex, Lord, xvii, xix, 45 and note.  
 Suvorov, General, 165 note.  
 Swedish prisoners, 386.

- Tatischeff, M., 101.  
 Tavern, 218.  
 Tchichagov, Admiral, 10 note, 167 and note, 276 note.  
 Tchichagov, Madame, 10 note, 167 and note, 391, 401.  
 Thompson, Archdeacon, 46 and note.  
 Tolstoy, 73 note.  
 Tonci, Salvator, 216 and note, 217.  
 Travelling, Russian mode of, 38.  
 Troitskoe, xix, 41 and note, 48 note, 98, 130, 145, 184-85, 188, 199, 204-6, 379.  
 Troitza Monastery, 228.  
 Tsarskoye Selo, 249, 386-88 and note.  
 Turkestanoff, Princess, 31 and note, 33, 34, 38.  
 Tutolmin, General, 292, 297 and note, 298-99, 302, 320, 323.  
 Tutolmin, Madame, 297 note, 323, 376.  
 Tver, 42.  
  
 Vigoni, Signore, 80.  
 Volinsky, Arthème, 105 note.  
 Volkoff, M., 323.  
 Voltaire, 21 note, 52 note, 141 and note.  
  
 Warren, Sir John, 11, 27, 28 and note, 29, 37, 81.  
 Wedding customs, 239-40.  
 Wilmot, Alicia, 3 and note, 163, 310. *See also* Ryder.  
 Wilmot, Catherine (Kitty), ix-x, xiii *et seq.*, 30, 50 and note, 59, 147, 149, 150-51, 153-54, 161 *et seq.*, 267, 269, 276, 280, 294-95, 307, 310, 381, 401.  
 Wilmot, Charles, xviii, 4.  
 Wilmot, Dorothea, 39 and note, 310, 311 and note.  
 Wilmot, Sir Eardley, xvi.  
 Wilmot, Captain Edward, xvi-xvii, 45 and note, 47 note.  
 Wilmot, Edward Eardley, 15 and note, 163, 310, 343.  
 Wilmot, Elizabeth, *née* Chetwood, xvii, 30 note, 74 and note.  
 Wilmot, Harriet, 8 and note.  
 Wilmot, Isabella, *see* Lecky.  
 Wilmot, John Eardley, 9 and note, 11, 150 note.  
 Wilmot, Martha (Matty), ix-x, xiii *et seq.*, 1 *et seq.*, 47 note, 48 note, 106 note, 121 note, 132 note, 197-98, 203, 220-21, 244, 261 *et seq.*, 269 note, 274 note, 401 note.  
 Wilmot, Sir Nicholas, xvi.  
 Wilmot, Robert, of Osmaston, xvi, 8 note, 9 note.  
 Wilmot, Sir Robert, xvi.  
 Wilmot, Robert Rogers, xvii, 30 note, 273 and note, 310.  
 Wilmot-Chetwood, Edward, xvii note.  
 Wilson, Sir Robert, 296 and note, 318 and note.  
 Winter Palace, 28 and note, 60 note.  
 Women, Russian, 205, 215-16, 224, 234-35, 271-72.  
 Woronzow, Count Alexander, 105 note, 135 and note, 212.  
 Woronzow, Count Arthème, 291 note.  
 Woronzow, Count Michael Ilarionovich, 20 note, 148 and note, 357 note.  
 Woronzow, Count Michael Simonovich, 10 note, 281, 392 and note.  
 Woronzow, Count Roman, 20 note, 48 note, 158-59, 321 and note.  
 Woronzow, Count Simon, xxi, 9 and note, 10, 12-15, 105 note, 401.  
 Woronzow, Countess Anna, *see* Stroganoff and Buturlin.  
 Woronzow, Countess Catherine, 291 and note.  
 Woronzow, Countess Catherine Romanovna, *see* Daschkaw.  
 Woronzow, Countess Catherine Simonovna, later Countess of Pembroke, 10 note, 13-15, 150 note, 401.  
 Woronzow, Countess Daria, 48 note.  
 Woronzow, Countess Elizabeth, *see* Poliansky.

- Woronzow, Countess Eudoxie, 105  
and note, 286.
- Woronzow, Countess Irène, 173  
and note, 252, 303-4, 323, 325,  
329-30, 388-89, 396.
- Woronzow, Countess Maria, later  
Buturlin, 283 note.
- Woronzow, Countess Pelagia, 64  
note, 66 note.
- Woronzow, Countess Prascovie,  
291 and note.
- Woronzow-Daschkaw, Count Ilar-  
ion, xi, 304 note.
- Woronzow-Daschkaw, Count Ivan,  
20 note, 46 note, 246, 281, 303,  
304 and note, 383 note.
- Yarmouth, 16.
- Young, Arthur, 215 and note, 264.
- Yousoupoff, Prince, 212, 228, 311  
and note.
- Zenovia, Prince, 294.
- Zoritch, Simon, 214 note, 387 and  
note.



